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WHAT MEN NEED MOST

REV. DANIEL A. POLING, LITT.D., LL.D.

WHAT MEN NEED MOST

and Other Sermons

BY

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WHAT MEN NEED MOST. II

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To

MY FRIEND

CHESTER PAUL GATES

and

TO THE MEMORY OF OTHER FRIENDS
GONE BUT NOT AWAY

FOREWORD

The first twenty-three chapters which follow contain several sermons which have appeared in the columns of the *Christian Herald* and the *Christian Endeavor World*. Appreciation is expressed to these publications for the privilege of including the material in this volume. Among sermons preached in connection with the pulpit programme of the Marble Collegiate Church will be found several that were prepared for special occasions,—Easter, Christmas, New Year's and the birthday anniversaries of Washington and Lincoln. Two chapters contain as many special citizenship sermons, and there are three that appeared first as a series, "From the Service." The eight concluding chapters are "Sermon Stories" delivered before young people on special occasions and as part of carefully planned programmes.

D. A. P.

CONTENTS

		PAGE
1.	What Men Need Most	13
2	Clown or King?	25
3.	The Greatest Fact of History	36
4	Three Facts and a Question	46
5	Dead King or Living Lord?	58
6.	Remember Jesus Christ	68
7.	What the Devil Asked	76
8.	The Grip that Holds	86
9.	Daniel, the Hebrew Who Purposed	95
10	Extremity and Opportunity	102
11	Conquerors of Circumstance	111
12	From the Manger to the Throne	122
13	We Finish to Begin	132
14	The Light that Has Never Failed	141
15	The Call of the New Crusade	145
16	The Curse of Cowardice	154
17.	Come On! Let's Go!	158
18	"Lafayette, We Are Here!"	166
19	Who Won the War?	176
20.	What Is War?	187
21	Civic Grafters	192

		PAGE
22	Personal Liberty	200
23	Homesick	205
24	The Man Who Was Pardoned	207
25	Lead On, Lord Jesus!	210
26	"Unto the least"	212
27	A Heart Story	214
28	"He Did It"	218
29	My First Prayer	221
30	A Father's Dilemma	226
31	The Land of Time Enough	230

WHAT MEN NEED MOST

1

WHAT MEN NEED MOST

Text: St. John 12:21. *"Sir, we would see Jesus."*

For the maintenance of physical life there are four absolute necessities,—oxygen, water, food and sleep.

Without air one can live only the briefest time. Shut it off, and almost immediately begins the torture of suffocation. A little more than five years ago a group of forty men found themselves in the horror of impending mustard-gas immersion, standing together in a closely sealed dugout room of Rambecourt, north from Toul in France. The lantern light played fitfully upon the figures whose faces were covered with masks; the earth about trembled from the vibrations of great guns just behind and overhead. Ninety minutes passed, and eyes were starting from their sockets, blood was seeping from mucous membranes, bodies were wracked with almost unendurable agonies. Then, with swelling glands and fairly bursting lungs, men fought to keep their reason. When relief came, and the place was unsealed, to those who staggered out, it was as though a hell had opened into heaven.

One may survive longer without water. I have never known the extreme torture of thirst. But what a relief is a spring in a desert! What a comfort a living stream in the wilderness! And we city dwellers learn to respond with a measure of enthusiasm that

reaches at times a restrained ecstasy, to the singing of a faucet. We are troubled when an unusually long, dry season has diminished our water reserves to the point where caution must be observed, and where some may feel a lack, both in quality and quantity. The lawns become a distressing sight. What richness many of the figures of the Psalmist and similes of Jesus have for us, in such a time; "As the hart panteth after the water brooks,"—and "Take of the water of salvation."

It is not many years since practically every large city of America was subject to periodical typhoid epidemics, because of impure drinking water. Now our great communities are in almost every instance immune to this former plague. Even isolated cases are becoming rare.

A few weeks ago I found myself following the high climbing forest trail that leads to the mountain lake which is the natural reservoir of Portland, Oregon. After leaving the automobile at the point where the great water mains begin and where all ordinary transportation ceases, thirty miles from the city itself, we travelled on horseback for twenty-one miles through a veritable sylvan paradise; firs towered above us a hundred and thirty feet "in the clear" before their limbs began. Where the trail dipped toward the river which carries the lake to the huge pipes below, the ferns stood higher than our heads as we sat our horses, and once we came upon a cedar forty-eight feet in circumference. In twenty-one miles we passed or crossed one hundred and thirty-six living springs or swiftly flowing mountain torrents; or one such natural fountain flowing into that central river from the north as it hurried downward from the great lake to quench the city's thirst, for every two hundred and seventy yards of that little more than

twenty miles. And later our wonderment was to be further increased, when we saw the river itself issue from the face of the mountain, as though from the very breast of nature. For half a mile it flows underground beneath the range. The unfailing lake, fed by springs and snows, hung high among the emerald hills, has no outlet human eye may see. Tens of thousands of people in the valley below have a gigantic and perfect natural water filter, the like of which is found nowhere else in the world. Yes, there is life or death in a city's drinking cup. "Water or I die," is one of the inexorable physical ultimatums.

One may survive longer still without food; but what a terrifying sight starvation is, whether it be a colossal spectacle spread across the high plateau of Armenia or the bleak steppes of Russia, or whether we come upon it in the tenderly kept chamber of the invalid whose malady no longer permits nourishment to be taken. Ringing in my ears as I turn back in thought across the years, is the cry of a little boy who could not eat,—a little boy about to die: "Bread, bread! I am hungry,—give me bread." Ah, we do well to open our purses at the invitation of such agencies as the Near East Relief. And in our great American cities there is always the threat of starvation for some, a threat we dare not ignore.

But the question of food has become tremendously complicated in our time. The abandoned farms of New England are a growing cause of anxiety,—the falling price of wheat a growing menace. Has it ever occurred to you that New York City, Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, and the rest, are helpless, and perhaps presently starving, giants? They cannot feed themselves, and their country cousins seem to be tiring of the task. What a problem is here suggested,—a problem that a

congressional grain subsidy will never solve; a problem that has to do with foreign markets, quite as much as it has to do with domestic markets; a problem that is as international as it is internal; a problem, my friends, that our so-called "splendid isolation" has not solved nor lessened.

In its more personal aspects, its more individual phases, the question of food is to-day not at all as it was even a decade ago. "Have you had your calories?" is a modern query; "How to Live," the standard text of the Life Extension Institute, a rather recent publication. But I am not one to decry the science of correct eating, nor would I belittle the profession of the dietitian. My observations convince me that to-day more people are eating themselves to death than otherwise. Conditions have changed since the clearing of the pioneer, with the forests and streams surrounding it, provided practically everything he and his sturdy outdoor family ate; and our manner of life is so different now that for us to eat what and as our fathers ate, is suicide, nor is it always slow.

A few years since I awoke to find myself spending nearly all of my time in my study; doing practically no physical labour, but remaining absolutely faithful to the meat, bread and Irish potato menu of my days in the sawmill and logging camp. Modern white bread, we are told by practical scientists, paves the way to a vast number of physical ailments for our children. You who recall, as I do, the steaming, vast and fragrant loaves of our unscientific childhood, will do well to be reminded, as I have been, that white bread is different now; that the perfections of the modern miller's art have refined it until it is of itself alone, too fine to hold the coarse and sturdy elements that in a cruder time

made brawn and brain. Ah, how far-reaching and how complicated has become that simple cry of a hungry child, "Bread, bread! I am hungry; give me bread."

Again, one may survive longer without sleep; but one of the most excruciating tortures of the Dark Ages was the walking agony; the keeping of prisoners awake until they became gibbering idiots or fell dead before their inquisitors. Life, without the complete relaxation of sleep, is impossible. Some require more sleep than others; children are especially dependent upon it; a distinguished inventor is said to get along famously with an almost unbelievably short time in bed. But no man can long survive absolute insomnia. How much attention our physician gives to our sleeping habits now. Are you subject to cold? What does the health column in your daily paper say? "Lots of fresh water; good, nourishing food regularly, and at least eight hours of sleep in twenty-four,—at least eight."

I am entirely out of harmony with the night schedules of many American homes,—dances, theatre parties and moonlight rides for juveniles make pale and puny people to do the world's work, and plan the world's play. Back to the old motto, "Early to bed and early to rise,"—but with the emphasis, the immediate emphasis for our great cities, upon "Early to bed."

And now, because there are some sadly troubled people who are having a hard time to follow their doctor's prescription, who are, as I once fought, fighting to fall asleep, let me say just these words of encouragement. We really sleep more than we think we do. Slumber is swift while sleeplessness is appallingly slow. One hour, two hours, and three pass as an age, while the rest of the night is a flash. And men who know, tell us that we also have wee naps we do not

remember, that we "drop off" when we are quite sure we have been boring holes in the darkness with wide-awake eyes unceasingly. And at any rate, no person ever wins sleep who fights for her. After an accident of some time ago, when for many nights I had turned back insomnia's anguish with only poor success, a wise practitioner said, "Well, to-night begin by saying, 'I'll not worry; I'll rest, since I cannot sleep. I'll rest eight hours, or two,—rest with my eyes open until they fall closed; I'll have repose and relaxation. Others get along with five hours; I'll be comfortable with as many or less!'" And the big principle buried in my friend's counsel had its vindication,—immediately I began to recover.

But sleep goes along with air, food and water. These four absolute necessities are strangely as well as strongly related. Let the organs of respiration be affected by impure or poisoned air, and we become the victims of wild nightmares and dream terrors; and have we not all of us learned the folly of asking the mind to carry repose while the stomach is burdened with the mixed dainties of modern man's gastronomic adventures?

Yes, for the maintenance of physical life, there are four absolute necessities,—oxygen, water, food and sleep.

But if life is to be more and better than bare existence, there are other necessities; if life is to be well-rounded, fruitful and happy, we must have more than bread to live by. The lowliest brute breathes, drinks, eats and sleeps, and remains a brute.

On our physical side we will do well to consider the claims of exercise, especially we of the office and bank, who have a tendency to waist extension rather than

chest expansion. Now and then one finds the exception to the rule. I have known a man of eighty who was hale and hearty in spite of the fact that habitually he never walked when he could ride, and who slept with his windows tightly closed. Such an exception proves the rule for most of us, however.

Rest and recreation are necessities, too. From the fierce clamours of our cities we must periodically find relief, or become nervous wrecks, and, worse, nerve mannikins. We need to place another emphasis upon recreation and make it in our vacation season, in our holiday, however short, a *re*-creation. Unless we do, we will find ourselves dreaming of times when we will turn aside to enjoy a well-earned relaxation, and play, but coming into an early old age, a premature decrepitude, with our dreams unrealised.

I have seen a mansion of a hundred rooms on Long Island, which the builder never occupied. He died at his desk the day before he was to have moved in. The newspaper accounts stated among other things that he had never taken a vacation.

But perhaps our order has been inverted. To place an emphasis upon rest and recreation implies that work has a large and fundamental place in the scheme of life. Is it not an absolute necessity to generous, worth-while living? Pity the person without a task, a task worth giving body and heart to. The electrical wizard Steinmetz was credited with saying, a little while ago, that presently electricity would be so applied as to make possible doing the menial, the drudgery tasks of society, in four hours out of the twenty-four, leaving for us all, twenty in which to find repose and enjoyment. Even with such a programme, such a division of time, the world would be far from an ideal

society unless our minds and souls had been schooled to appreciate and rightly use the time.

I have known men and women who really seemed to love that which others called drudgery,—the old cobbler of our childhood town, the venerable farmer who made our first time away from home a garden of happy recollections, and the singing laundress who said that she preferred washing (and that before the day of power washers) to dusting. These had a philosophy that others would be happier for learning. Perhaps if I cannot come into the task that I have longed for, I can fall in love with the one that I have.

Ah, and how friends have become a necessity,—an absolute necessity in my life! Who would live without them? And could we? Unconsciously we lean upon them; they are part of our unexposed, innermost being, —true friends, I mean, deeply true, vastly intimate, friends who are not questioned and could not be. With such a friend I stood one evening by the open grave of another friend, and later when I spoke of our infrequent visits, our irregular letters, our wide separations, he replied, "Yes, and how great a thing it is to possess a friendship that does not stand at last upon even its most delightful forms, that does not depend upon pen or contact or speech!"

Again, life needs to-day, needs imperatively, a great ambition. Woe is the man who never hears a high call, in whose ears never sounds a mighty shout of challenge. Woe is such a man, for his character has in it a fatal defect; something,—something vital, has been left out. A great English mountain-climber on being asked why he took the risks involved in climbing Mt. Blanc, replied, "Because Mt. Blanc is there." When I read of each fresh attempt to swim the English

Channel, I find something elemental stirring within my own breast.

Do I hear you say, "A useless waste of time and energy"? Well, nearly so, I grant, but at least an indication of the fact that the divine fire burns and needs only to be given a better torch. Another follows the same gleam to find an elusive disease germ and isolate it. Youth, with the passion of it in his blood, dedicates his life to a great cause; becomes a Gough, or John G. Woolley of prohibition, a Lovejoy or Garrison of emancipation; a Lincoln of patriotism.

Ah, and the distraught times in which we live wait on men and women to hear high ambition's call to-day. The East Side of Jacob Riis is crying for his spiritual descendants. A thousand cities of this continent alone need as many Hull Houses, and the terrifying war clouds which stand again along the horizon of Europe remind us that we have done little enough to keep our promise; that we have scarcely inconvenienced ourselves to strengthen society against the bloody-mawed monster of armed conflict. What a generation for the soul of ardent, generous, Jehovah-led youth to come upon! Here is the new impossible to be dared; here is the new earth waiting for new-born men and women to give it birth.

We have come quite naturally now to what man needs most—to his supreme necessity. Is it health? No. Is it water? No, it is not. Is it food? No. Is it sleep? No, it is none of these nor is it all of them. Nor is it rest, recreation, friends, work, ambition; nor is it the divine fire of an overwhelming compulsion. What does man need most?

But first we must know two things about man,—these two things. Where does he come from—what is he?

And where is he going—what is he to be? There are certain living creatures which die when their physical environment is changed; in these species tragedy follows tragedy, until a careful study has been made of the creature itself, and until the fundamental things about its life are known, its peculiar needs supplied.

Thus it is with man. Give him breath and bread, drink and repose,—all of these,—but give him nothing more, and he will die, for man has come from God, and his destiny is heaven-born. His soul is restless until it rests in Him: all of the physical necessities, however abundantly supplied, are not enough. And so, after he has tested every other, man comes at last, as came the Greeks of the text, with the importunate request, "Sir, we would see Jesus." We would see Jesus, not the disciples, nor the high priest, but Jesus. Sir, we would see Jesus: We would see Jesus, for He alone can forgive our sins, cover them with the divine alchemy of His forgetfulness, until the corrosion of our blighting remorse is arrested. We would see Jesus, for He alone can satisfy our insatiate thirst; He alone can give us peace. We would see Jesus,—Jesus of the well, who cries, "Whosoever shall drink of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever shall drink of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, for the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into eternal life." We would see Jesus and know His companionship, for earthly friends, however true, must fail us in the end; the father stands upon the threshold of the innermost chamber of his child's suffering, and struggles to enter, but cannot; the mother bends low over the fevered brow of her now unconscious darling, and with travail of soul beats against the inexorable provision that places a limit

upon her ministry. Ah, we would see Jesus, for He crosses the threshold, he takes captivity captive, and with Him there is no, "Thus far shalt thou come and no farther." Out to the end of the world He goes with us; brother to every human woe is He; healer of the last agony; comforter of the deepest sorrow, and captain of our salvation. The importunate cry of the text is the voice of every language; it is the voice of the multitude surging about these ancient foundations, the multitude that all unknowing passes by. Somehow these must be led to find Him.

"We would see Jesus." Men and women, do you hear it? It is a supplication and a challenge,—a supplication and a challenge to the church first of all. One winter Sunday night at the close of an evangelistic service, in response to a special invitation, a man in one of the rear pews of a great church raised his hand. Later, while in a personal conference with the minister, he confessed his sins to his Maker, called upon the name of his Saviour, and found forgiveness and peace. His first words, as he rose from his knees, will remain with that preacher so long as he lives. O Church of God, hear them; these were the words, spoken not in bitterness, but in great surprise,—"How does it happen that for twenty years, because I promised my mother, I have been going to at least one church service every week, sometimes Catholic, sometimes Protestant, and last Sunday night was the first time I was ever given a chance to get to the foot of the Cross?" Sir, we would see Jesus!

That cry sounds like a wail of death above the ravished cities of the Near East where so-called Christian nations have signed the terms of Mahomet the bloody. "We would see Jesus. We have seen the statesmen and

the warriors; we have heard their promises, and in a delirium of joy have shouted the praises of those we acclaimed as our emancipators, only to find that again we had been deceived. Now we, a broken remnant, in hospitals and refugee camps, in orphanages and secluded mountain fastnesses,—we would see Jesus."

This is the cry of every division in our complicated society. I hear it in the coal conferences and in steel—We would see Jesus! and see Jesus it is or know again the hardship of strike and of lockout; see Jesus and find the Jesus way, or fail, fail and face again the empty furnace of the poor and the bitterness of industrial strife.

Here is a programme in idealism,—and only such a programme has even the promise of success. All others have already and absolutely failed. Here is a programme in idealism founded upon the Decalogue and illumined by the light that lighteth every man coming into the world: a programme in idealism that declares its ultimatums in terms like these: "Thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not covet; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not bear false witness;" and that trumpets its great summation, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself."

Only one thing remains to be said. Those who came seeking Jesus in the story of the text, sought an introduction from those who knew Him. The supreme business of the Christian Church is the introducing of men and women and society to Jesus Christ. But only those who know Him themselves are competent to introduce others to Him.

It is the cry of a dying world: Sir, we would see Jesus. My friends, are we, we of the church, prepared to answer that cry?

2

CLOWN OR KING?

Text: Proverbs 23:7. *"For as he thinketh in his heart so is he."*

In other times the difference between a clown and a king was frequently the distance between a step and a throne. They were very close together, but with this distinction,—one sat or grovelled at the feet of the other. As a rule, one thing they had in common,—the accident of birth. Each was as he was born,—a clown or a king, a fool or a monarch; one wore a cap, the other a crown; one held a bauble, the other a sceptre. And it is whispered that there were instances in which headdress might have been exchanged and stations reversed, without grief to society.

To-day the clown and the king are physically even closer together, though in reality they are farther apart; for now, by the measure of his thinking, a man is a clown or a king. For as he,—fool or monarch,—thinketh in his heart, so is he.

The words, more literally translated, are, "For, as he calculates with himself, so is he," and in their setting refer to a selfish and evil-minded host who while he with words urges his guests to enjoy his viands, in his heart resents their presence at his table. With fine directness the Psalmist tells us that such a host is not as his words or his wealth, but as his thinking; that he

is little and mean because of his thoughts, that his calculations, the arithmetic of his soul, make him a clown.

If we accept this standard, if we apply the text, birth and station have little if anything at all to do with civilisation's real aristocracy. For, as men and women think, deeply think, so they are,—clowns or kings.

But we are surrounded to-day,—and it is, I suppose, quite natural for us to feel, as never before,—with temptations to think small and cynical thoughts. Surely the times are selfish. Men of large affairs have been almost daily quoted as saying that following the war the motto of business seemed to be, "Make up for lost time,—get yours and get it quick." Government investigations still incomplete reveal a sickening degree of faithlessness and an appalling amount of profiteering on the homeward side of the Atlantic. Recently the daily press carried a story of peonage in Florida that makes Uncle Tom's Cabin look like a pallid nursery story,—a boy sent to a convict camp for being a trespasser on a freight train, sent into slavery by a county sheriff who was given $20.00 a head for each man delivered to this particular lumber company, a sheriff who on his own testimony disregarded a registered letter from the lad's family and ordered a misleading message returned. Picture, if you will, this under-nourished youth from a respectable Dakota home, who had rashly started out to see the world,—and while you do so, remember your own youth:—working ankle-deep in the swamp muck, stricken with weakness, smitten with fever, stumbling and falling; and then hear the sing of a seven-pound mule-whip as it wraps itself around that white back for a hundred lashes, and as for extra measure the flogger beats his helpless prisoner's head with its weighted handle. Remember, men and women of a proud civili-

sation, that this murder occurred in connection with a state-wide system, and in America,—the United States of America,—under the sanction of law, and on the estate of a law-maker, at the hands of a duly-authorised brute who worked for a legally incorporated lumber company.

Heaven pity us for feeling ourselves superior to the Turk and for looking askance at the Bolshevist. The record of our American civilisation in peonage, in lynchings, where the black man has been the chief victim, in child-labour and in industrial slavery, for the last quarter century, is, at times, and in spots, enough to shame us before God and man. It should send us in sackcloth and ashes to the feet of the one who said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of one of these . . . ye have done it unto me."

So far as I am concerned, I do not hold myself as free of the shame, merely because my hands did not swing that instrument of torture. I am an American, and until these evil matters have been adjusted, these wrongs righted, these blasphemies against the democracy Washington and his associates established, and Abraham Lincoln suffered martyrdom to save,—until these blasphemies, I say, have been utterly repudiated by law, and completely destroyed in practice, I shall feel myself as one citizen, to the reach of my voice and the limit of my ability, *responsible*.

Yes, our present environment has a tendency to inspire cynical and small thinking. The New York *Times* of April 18th, 1923, carried a statement from Commissioner Haynes, saying that thirty-three Federal enforcement agents had been killed outright by bootleggers while in the line of duty,—murdered by liquor outlaws, and that more than three hundred others had

suffered gunshot wounds of a more or less serious nature,—and we still have a laugh for a bootlegger's joke! By the sorrow of the widows and the fatherless of these thirty-three who died in defence of the law,—not this law alone, but the law that protects us,—I cry Shame.

Again, the experiences of our own lives have a tendency to incite the mind to morbid thinking. Where are the dreams, the hopes of youth, or, as the poet has it, "the loves of yesteryear"? Behind the majority of you are little shoes in treasure-boxes,—tiny things that were never worn out; faded roses of memory in dusty frames of recollection; or houses of high ambition that were mortgaged to the necessity of a fateful hour of need; or the perfidy of a business associate perhaps, or, yet more terrible, the treason of a friend; failure in business, the tumbled ruins of a structure raised by economy and self-denial and the calloused hands of hard work; or physical visitations that have bowed a once-proud form and lined a smooth and placid brow with the deep furrows of pain unutterable. And behind all of us is disillusionment,—we have come to know the world, each other,—and—ourselves. Once we believed all things and hoped all things; now we count the cost; anticipate the settlement, doubt the wisdom of the enterprise, for time has led us to the tree of knowledge, and we have eaten of its bitter fruit.

Yes, our own experiences make royal thinking difficult. It is not hard to dream when you lie in the sunshine upon the green grass of unenlightened childhood. Then it is not hard to hope and plan. To-day we stand mature and scared by old graves, beneath skies that have frowned at least as often as they have smiled.

In the once-shining casket that our youth gave us is a pierced and shrunken heart.

The log of any city church for a single week is melancholy reading,—men out of work; home providers sick; mothers distracted; children undernourished. Yes, the times in which we exist are conducive to infidelity in thought.

But do you think that I would have said as much as I have said, if this were all to be said? With the facts before me, with these experiences, many of them blazed upon my body and my soul, I bring a message not of despair, but one altogether of hope. These sufferings and disappointments and disillusionments and tragedies do not make you a pessimist, a cynic, an infidel, a mental clown. No, only your thinking. As you think in your heart, in your innermost mind,—and the Hebrew word here may be translated mind as well as heart,—as you think in your innermost mind, that you are. Are you broken, wrecked in body, ruined in purse, bereft in loved ones, forgotten, deserted, defeated? If you would rise from the steps of the clown to the throne, if you would be king, then claim imperial thoughts and think a king.

A man lay upon a white bed with consciousness just returning, and with consciousness came pain,—pain excruciating, unbearable, destroying. The opiates brought the mercy of stupor; then consciousness, again with pain. Days passed and weeks. One morning the sufferer, now a convalescent, turned his eyes toward the window, just in time to see a tiny spider cast off from the awning and drop with his first web cable to an anchorage on the sill. For hours now the man lay with his eyes upon that marvellous spectacle, the spinning of a web. He became less conscious of his body as he

took new life within his mind; he was like a child, and with the secretiveness of a child,—and as a result came tragedy. The nurse rolled up the awning at sunset, and destroyed the half-spun web.

The man was senselessly, violently, disturbed, and had a very bad night; but when his mind had cleared from the sleeping potion in the morning, and he turned again, half fearfully, toward the window, the little fellow was busy once more and now in safety, for even the nurse would not risk another outburst on the part of her patient. The spider went on to complete his task, and through the long August days he swung there in his castle and den, 'twixt the sunlight and shadow, while the watcher's mind caught the glory of the lesson and his will set itself to the herculean task of building up again the broken walls of his body.

It is not the experience that makes you what you are,—it is your thinking. Paul wrote Philippians,—his joy letter, his epistle of gladness,—while chained and in a Roman dungeon. "I thank God for every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all, making request with joy." Thus does the prisoner, the buffeted, flogged, stoned and ship-wrecked, herald of the cross, thank God for remembrance, and pray with joy. It is not the experience that makes you what you are,—it is what you think.

And this same period of history which sees us reluctantly and under pressure abolishing flogging and convict leasing,—this same generation which sees so-called Christian nations exploiting oil concessions at the expense of Christian minorities, and throwing a gambler's dice down the line of international boundaries,—which witnesses sabotage on the one hand and industrial slavery on the other, which crucifies priests

in Russia and lynches negroes in America, this same generation has produced the wireless, that phantom ministry of enlightenment and pleasure which makes the ether above us a shoreless sea of song, bearing richly laden ships of culture; has found new worlds beyond the suns above us and new riches beneath our feet, has given us a way of travel down the path of the lightnings, has brought to our suffering humanity new cures for disease, relief and postponement for incurable maladies and has enlarged the key of charity until now it opens the world's store-house to supply the world's need.

As another has written, and whatever the time and circumstance, "You are what you think you are,"—clean or filthy, hopeful or despairing, weak or strong, rich or poor, you are what you think you are. Schiller's dying cry was "Give me a great thought." What a morning prayer that is for all of us! "Give me a great thought!"

I have a friend whose chamber window overlooks the Hudson, and we have stood together there with the sunlight marching down the Palisades. As I listened to him describe the morning and the noon, the evening and the twilight, and as we followed their pathways across the majestic plane of the water, I saw not the Hudson, but my friend. Great thoughts have come to him upon the tide of that mighty river.

It is springtime; Central Park is wearing her green carpets and her tapestries of emerald and sapphire; presently her hair will be braided with flowers, and the trees of her gardens alive with the songs of many birds, while around her at night a million stars will shine out from house windows, blending with God's candles set in the sky, until the imperial city's breath-

ing place will seem an island world, afloat upon a silver sea. Ah, great thoughts will come to you if you visit Central Park in the springtime.

Go and stand in front of the venerable municipal building of America's largest city and look up, following the chaste and regal lines of the Woolworth tower, the "cathedral of commerce," until you rest your gaze at last upon the clouds that ride before the waves of the winds that break upon her topmost spires. Then there will come to you that for which the dying Schiller cried.

I have found it in the desert and among the mountains and on the sea, in the soiled face of a little gamin of the street, in the homecoming welcome of my dog; in the laughter of playing children, in the warping in of an ocean liner, in the discordant clatter of coal pouring into a cellar,—telling of the red in its black. I have found it in steaming dugouts where men wrapped bandages about wounded bodies, and in battle graveyards where crosses were as plentiful as the pines upon my native mountains. I have found it in the house of the living and in the chamber of the dead, in singing and in weeping, in love and in laughter, in sickness and in health, in prosperity and adversity,—that for which the dying Schiller cried,—I have found,—a great thought.

And if the text is more than a text, if it is true, then we must think great thoughts about ourselves. "For as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he," and lest we make the mistake of a wrong emphasis at the beginning, let us remember first another text, "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." And another, "What is man that thou (God) art mindful of him?"

In the last analysis we appraise ourselves. Are we sensual and brutish creatures? Yes, if we think sensually and as brutes; then absolutely we are. Are we slave-drivers in industry, Shylocks in trade, tyrants in our home relationships? What are our thoughts, first; then I will answer. Or are we children of the king, brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ, heirs of immortality, with work to do in the world, strong work, hard tasks, helpful ministries? As are our innermost thoughts, so are we. Tennyson but puts it in another way when he says, "The man who can is the man who will," and you remember the words of Channing Pollock's hero in "The Fool," which is a very great play. Answering the eager query of the little cripple girl, so anxious to be strong, he says, "If you believe, if you believe hard enough."

Such great thoughts about ourselves lead us into true humility, for in so thinking we come at last to the realisation of the fact that we are but the culmination of the past, and that we are debtors to the ages. As Quinet has it, "Old Chaldea, Phœnicia, Babylon, Memphis, Judea, Egypt, Etruria, all have had a share in my education, and live in me."

Finally, if you would reign, if you would hold a sceptre instead of a clown's bauble, if you would be a king, identify yourself in your thinking with great causes, and give your life to tasks that are big and true.

I met Jacob Riis just fourteen days before he started on his last journey. Jacob Riis would never have been more than any one of a thousand push-cart merchants of his race had he not heard the cry of the East Side; as it was, Theodore Roosevelt called him the most useful citizen of New York. Edith Cavell would have

passed from the hospital of her service an unknown, had she not for truth's sake kept a rendezvous with death; as it is, her words, "Patriotism is not enough," will have the resiliency of youth when the marble of her statue is dust. Savonarola was a monk, until for a cause he became a martyr; now, with Lincoln and Calvin and Wesley and Livingstone and the rest, he belongs to the ages.

It is very true that we are not and will not become Lincolns, but we are in a world of need and opportunity. Not all great tasks are completed. Many burdens are upon man, too great for him to bear alone. "Think on these things." Study to find yourself. Lend your voice and influence and your example to law enforcement, register against sharp practices in business, align yourself with movements working intelligently and in Christlike ways to destroy war. Give money and time to famine relief in the East, and far and near. Be alive to your duties as a citizen. Do not disfranchise yourself, do not make yourself in reality a man or a woman without a country, by remaining away from the polls on Election Day. Improve your mind by reading good literature and by hearing prophetic messages. Install a radio. Refuse to allow your own affairs, your personal, your business, your selfish affairs, to immerse you. There are many women and men who are my corroborating testimony when I say that fine thinking and abiding happiness are the reward of those who tithe (or better) their time, who return to God service that, measured by hours and reduced to the cash values of the street, represent a fortune.

Yes, if you would think great thoughts, identify yourself with greatness in loyalty and service; live and grow

in the mental and spiritual atmosphere of greatness, in the environment of the sublime.

In Lake Sunapee, New Hampshire, Chinook salmon have a maximum weight of fourteen pounds; in the Columbia River and the sea this same royal fish attains a growth of sixty pounds and more. Scientists tell us that fish of certain species at least are large or small in relation to the size of the bodies of water they inhabit, that physical life in this strange way is a creature of environment.

A New York physician, speaking to a father concerning tentative plans which the man had for taking his children into another section of the continent, said, "By all means take them if you can; it will give them an inch more of chest expansion and add inches to their height."

But beyond any possible truth the doctor's words may contain, we are the children and the adults of our mental environment. Physically, intellectually, morally, spiritually, we are, by the measure of our thinking, clowns or kings. Then let me pray—

Give me great thoughts, O God,
  Lend me the royal mind;
Lead me where truth has trod,
  Where faith has been refined.

I, too, would know the plan
  Thou hast to others brought,—
Crown me, a common man,
  With high and kingly thought.

What matters, then, my dole,
  Upon this peasant clod?
Within my cloistered soul
  I keep a tryst with God.

3

THE GREATEST FACT OF HISTORY

Text: St. John 12:32. *"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."*

Christianity is the greatest fact of history,—greater than creation, greater than discovery, greater than invention, greater than government.

Creation is the act of causing to exist; creation is first, save only the Creator who is greater than His created. Christianity is the supreme product of the creative mind and will; also Christianity is the supreme expression of the mind and will of God in man.

Discovery is a making known, as in science, education, art or exploration. Christianity is a making new; the recreating of the souls of men, the ways of institutions, and the spirit of human relationships.

Invention is the act of devising or creating in the mechanical world that which has not before existed; Christianity has to do with inventors and is the ultimate expression of the best that is in them as it is the "summum bonum" of all others.

Government is control, direction, order, authority, regulation, as of church, the home, or the affairs of state. Christianity is spiritual authority; the control of the act by the direction of the heart and will. Christianity dictates and commands the motive, and rules

governments by exercising dominion over the consciences of subjects.

Christianity is the greatest fact of history because of its promises. In my father's library was a set of books entitled, "Thirty Thousand Promises," and all of these were taken from the pages between Genesis and Revelation. Promises for every age and circumstance of life were there, and all were the sure word of the eternal, all-wise and all-powerful Father in Heaven.

Other religions have promises too, but it is safe to say that no follower of Confucius or Buddha or Mohammed would be able to stand successfully at this point in debate with a Christian. Where other systems of faith promise extermination, the chance to forget and disappear, Christianity promises a glorious immortality; where other religions promise a change of form or a later return to earth, as a new creature, or at best a future of self-gratification and sensual pleasure, Christianity promises the fulfilment of life, the perfecting of the soul, and the eternity of good.

The promises of Christianity cover every condition, every circumstance of human experience. To me they find their richest expression in those words so all-comprehensive, "As are thy days, so shall thy strength be." To me that means everything; strength and healing for body, mind and soul. Again and again I have thrown myself upon that promise; again and again under the drive of the most extreme necessity I have turned to it. "As are thy days, so shall thy strength be."

I know a man who remembers a crucial second on a college oval years ago when his limbs failed and his spikes no longer gripped the cinders; when things went suddenly black before his eyes, and the control of his physical being had all but gone from his hands. The

finish of the gruelling race was twenty strides away, and in a flash of desperation he realised that with the deciding event of a great meet all but won,—fairly, magnificently won,—for his Alma Mater, he was being unhanded by a muscular seizure such as every athlete comes to know at one time or another. And then came the remembrance of that promise, "As are thy days, so shall thy strength be," and on it he lunged across the tape to victory.

"As are thy days, so shall thy strength be." The widow gathers her fatherless children under its shelter; the dying turn their failing eyes toward its unfailing beacon; the tempted take from it grace with which to overcome their dearest sin; the discouraged find it sounding a bugle of hope. For remorse it has the courage of confession; for the wronged it has the soothing waters of forgetfulness, and in it they find the blessing that comes to those who forgive.

To the young it may be a long time unheeded, and for its ministry they may feel conscious of no need; but for youth, ardent, impetuous and wasteful, it has reserves of caution and conservation; while for maturity it has the finishing genius of high emprise. Always it comes with those superb qualities that crown success, and for all it releases the energies of body, mind and soul, that raise a task to its completion, that bring an endeavour, however humble, into the morning of its perfect day. And here lies the divine in the promise, here is God—this all-pervading assurance of perfection,—perfect health, perfect joy, perfect peace, perfect work, perfect life.

This all-pervading assurance of perfection, I say, is peculiarly Christian, for with the promise comes the demonstration and example of Jesus Christ, and from

Him radiates the glorious invitation, "Follow Me," and "Where I am, there ye shall be also." The confirmation of one who did follow Him far and who is with Him now, is, "We shall be like Him."

Yes, Christianity, by the number, the measure, the quality and the demonstration of its promises is the greatest fact of history. Were you to call the witnesses, were it possible to gather them together and to take their testimony, you would fill the earth, and their voices would drown the sound of all the waters.

Again, Christianity is the greatest fact of history because of what it has done, because of its accomplishments. Measure an institution by its contribution to human good. Judge every tree by its fruits.

Christians have not always been prompt to apply this principle to others. Perhaps the hard school of the early church trained some to deal harshly and with a spirit of intolerance altogether foreign to their great teacher. Something at least of the homely philosophy found in the familiar verse, "There is so much of bad in the best of us and so much of good in the worst of us, that it does not behoove any of us to say anything about the rest of us," should permeate our spirits.

Vast contributions have been made to the happiness, health and knowledge of man by movements and institutions other than those associated with Christianity. Indeed, it is when we contemplate and study these, properly evaluating them, that we find our most inspiring comparisons and our fairest perspective as Christians. For Christianity has not only made its distinctive contributions but it has refined and perfected those of others.

As to what the supreme contribution of Christianity to man has been, there may be a wide difference of

opinion. To me there is no question that it is the sacredness of personality, the sense of the soul, the soul of the individual as priceless above rubies, as richer than riches. Jesus gave the right-about-face to human society when He said, "Ye are the temple of the Holy Ghost"; ye,—not the altar of the innermost sanctuary,—ye are the holy of holies. Then did he set a little child, babe of the humblest toiler, above the diadem of a kingdom. Then did he set in motion forces that make a thorn in the heel of a barefoot boy of greater concern to society than the spangled trappings of a prince, while the hours of toil for women and children are a more vital problem for governments than the protection of temporal wealth.

And against everything that violates personality, every influence that degrades the human body, debases the human mind, pollutes the soul, Jesus has arrayed Christianity. With hospitals and schools, institutions of mercy and programmes of healing, He and His followers have set about the task of setting in order the world.

Yes, this sense of the sacredness of life, the sacredness of personality, the sacredness of that which is the supreme expression of God's creative instinct, power and love,—this into which He pours Himself, this which, as God Himself is deathless, can never die,—this is the supreme contribution of Christianity to man. And the mighty movements of reform that the Christian Church has inspired and led, the missionary adventures of her most intrepid saints, the social programmes that take their life from the fountain which flows from His side who said, "Love thy neighbour as thyself," the ever growing sentiment against war,—these are expres-

sions of the Christ-filled mind against that which injures and destroys personality.

Slavery died because it debased personality,—the personality of the slave and of the slave-driver. Duelling was outlawed because it degraded personality. Prohibition could never have succeeded had it not been for the fact that beverage alcohol and the saloon raised the brute and destroyed personality. Organised vice everywhere faces the inevitable ban of civilisation because it leaves a blotch of shame upon personality, and armed conflict will pass from the stage of human action because it is the destroyer, red-handed and colossal, of human personality; because by one fell stroke it ends the present and slays the future, leaves its victims twice upon the plains of battle, once in fair-eyed sons who had but just begun to live, and once in generations sealed forever in the dead loins of potential fatherhood destroyed.

This is Christianity's greatest contribution,—the exaltation of personality, the sense of its sacredness, "Thou art the temple of the Holy Ghost"; within thee God dwells, not in stone, nor in golden vessels, not in shrines nor yet in arks and temples, not in pride of station, nor in pomp of state. But within *thee,* a little child, a maiden fair, or stalwart youth,—a woman, a man, seamstress or maid, princess or queen, toiler or captain of trade,—within thee God dwells; thou art His holy place.

Other religions and institutions have made contributions to the happiness and knowledge of man, have enriched art and given to science, have measured their strength in numbers against the followers of the Galilean, and we do ourselves no credit when we ignore

or despise their gifts. They have raised the walls of beautiful cities and stretched wide the boundaries of empires; they have taught man's mind and strengthened man's body, filled his coffers and feasted his ambitions,—aye, and they have fed his soul,—fed it with husks perhaps, but they have recognised the deathless longings of his immortal spirit and have sought to give back an answer to his cry, "Light, light, more light!"

But when this has been said, and when all has been said, they have failed,—failed because they lacked that which Christianity alone had to give in its simplicity and fulness, the sense of the sacred in man, the divine in personality.

Again, Christianity is the greatest fact of history because of its authority. Authority is not a popular word with the multitude just at present, but it is a very important word,—a word that home, business, church and state need to hear more often. Discipline and control, which are but expressions of authority, are not particularly popular, either. But until they are given more attention among us, our children will continue to be late on the streets and early into trouble; our courts will continue to be advertising agencies for shameless stories of broken vows; our business relationships will continue to wait too frequently at the door of the shrewd manipulator rather than in the office of the honest adviser, and our government will not cease to be a football for corrupt politicians.

Christianity is the greatest fact of history because it is the religion of supreme authority; its government is above all governments, and we are told in the book of its law that it shall "never end." Its rule is for time and for eternity. We are committed on this continent, thank God, to a separation between church and

state, but, thank God again, that in the words of former Associate Justice Brewer of the Supreme Court of the United States, "This is a Christian nation," in God we put our trust, and must!

But how idle seem these brave words when we contemplate so many of our individual and national actions. No wonder pessimists find comfort and infidels their "evidence." Not until we have compared the records of the generations and assembled all the facts, do we see the upward bend of civilisation, do we catch a vision of the state that is to be, and find faith to unite our voices in those stupendous words of God's supreme declaration of authority, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself."

Our eyes turn upward to the King upon the throne of the eternities,—to the High Command of the soul, and with discernment, with a full regard for our place and responsibility in the great event of salvation,—salvation for the individual and for society,—we sing with Browning, "God's in His Heaven; all's right with the world."

But Christianity is the greatest fact of history because of its method. The most amazing words ever spoken by a leader were these, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." All other conquerors came with power and force, lashes in the hands of drivers herded the minions of Xerxes, a million strong, into the pass of Thermopylæ; terror ran before the hordes of Attila and Genghis-Khan; lustful promises and fanatical hate incited the hosts of Mohammed; fear in a thousand hideous forms has been the bulwark of every jungle worship.

But Jesus Christ, who stands to-day, supreme, alone,

in the hungry soul of the world, when He laid down before His lieutenants His final plan of campaign and gave them the directions that were to continue until the heavens roll back as a scroll, said, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." "Love, so amazing, so divine!" "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." And, in the last analysis, Christianity is great because it is a spirit, and because it captures, commands, controls, the spirits of men.

What confirmation that promise that He would draw all men has had! They swung Him up between earth and sky; lifted Him upon the slave's cross, between thieves, and with the first breath of His, "It is finished," began the disintegration of the Roman Empire. They stoned Stephen, and one of that very company of persecutors became the field marshal of His first advance toward earth's last frontiers. They fed His followers to lions they had starved for the occasion, and presently the bloody sand became the seed-ground of His church. They burned His Book, only to find that they had but unchained His Word.

At last, when persecution and martyrdom had failed, popularity came to more seriously threaten His plan. Men took on His name in easy fashion and hid their true selves behind loud professions. Wealth and distinction turned the heads of His captains; they came to serve earthly monarchs with zeal that was greater than their passion for their Lord; the visible church became corrupt with temporal power.

But though shaken to its foundations, His cause stood fast, and to-day, with perilous times behind and yet weightier events before, His spirit rises an irresistible

tide in human affairs, bearing man forward, drawing him upward and on.

In all history there is no other spectacle like this,—a king without a capitol, a conqueror without an army, an empire without a sword. The fact is proof that love is the greatest thing in the world. Its only answer is God.

And here we come to the conclusion of the whole matter, and the conclusion is the whole matter: Christianity is the greatest fact of history because Christianity is Jesus Christ. When we turn to Him, how futile are all words, for He is love; He is man; He is God.

4

THREE FACTS AND A QUESTION

Text: Esther 4:14. *"Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"*

The message has its basis in the life of a queen, in the character of a woman,—Esther, the Jewess. History presents her in the white light granted only those who serve and save; who battle mightily and minister largely. She symbolises three vast virtues,—loyalty, liberty, and faith. She was true to her people; she liberated her race; she believed implicitly in her God.

In her time she turned wrath into praise and brought life out of death; for our time she is a brave example and lofty inspiration.

These are the words of the message: "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" In them there are three facts and a question.

The first fact of the message is the fact of personality, *"Thou* art come." That I am, staggers me. There are times when I search for the reasons behind my birth, when I would lay hold of the barriers that fence me from the field where my life-germ was planted. There are times when my mind rushes on to leap the chasm between me and the things that are hid with

Christ in God. But I never cease to wonder at my being. Yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow are three mysteries, and the greatest of these is to-day.

I have watched my children in their cradles, in the first discovery of infancy, playing with their hands, and I am bound to confess that my own hands are quite as much a miracle to me now as they were back in the grey dawn before memory began, when I saw them first.

But I am and "thou art," and though I cannot explain, I should be a fool to deny. I am hands and feet; I am a body, but my body is not I. I am a spirit. There is a container and there is the thing contained. How superficial, how inconsistent, is the man who uses vocal organs he cannot understand, to deny the fact of a soul he cannot understand! He would better begin by denying the existence of his own voice.

Do you debate the question by insisting that eyes may see eyes and ears hear voices, and hands touch hands, but that no one can measure a soul? I have touched my cold dead; and, though the form of it was there, it had neither eyes nor ears, neither hands nor feet; it did not speak, and it did not smile. That which I had clasped was gone.

"Thou art come." Not a thing of flesh and bone, but a being of brawn and brain; a living soul, an immortal. "Thou art come." Sprung from the loins of all the past, and inheritor of the past's taint and virtue, subject to disease and tempted, poor or rich, versatile or dull "thou art come."

There are dignity and terror in the personal pronoun. Up from the dust into which have crumbled the moulds that fashioned the unnumbered billions of humans who preceded you; out of the matter God breathed upon after He had shaped the first Adam,

and back into which your earthly house shall pass, "thou art come."

At the risk of inciting you to overvalue yourselves, to overestimate your qualities by misunderstanding the direction of the emphasis, I give you the supreme truth: Personality is eternal.

The second fact of the message is the fact of place. "Thou art come to the kingdom." And the kingdom is the kingdom of the present. You are in the world; just now it may not be easy to realise it, but your feet are on the earth, and all about you are people with faults and follies as well as with smiles and congratulations. There is before you the humdrum business of bread-making and child-rearing, of harvesting and ship-building, of preaching and teaching, of suffering and dying, of service and of sacrifice. You have missed the message of life unless you go out every morning of the working day to master practical affairs, to solve immediate problems, to meet the crisis of the moment, whether that crisis be a high circumstance such as Esther faced, or a small sum that wrinkles the brow of a child. We have not seen the beauties or caught the lessons of the radiant Jewess, whose soul was more exquisite than her form or face, until we have thrust her great ordeal into the life of our times, into the affairs of our generation.

Do not misunderstand me. God pity us when we lose our dreams or when we cease to see visions. We must never become so engrossed with ministries that we have no patience or time for musing, for prayer, and for communion. Eventually he runs in a circle who runs without rest. A business bankrupts itself when it becomes a mere counting machine. There is an efficiency that is inefficient. We must cultivate the

amenities of the heart; we must wait with friendship and tarry with God, if we are to see developed within ourselves that spiritual initiative that, more than physical force and mechanical genius, shapes the destiny of the world.

But we must bring this spiritual initiative, we must apply this moral fervour, this divine optimism, to the tasks of the kingdom. We must harness our dreams; we must put a sword into the hands of our visions; we must honour our friendships by rendering a service, and glorify our God by making a life.

The kingdom is your kingdom, yours to-day as it was Queen Esther's yesterday. Again the dignity of personality. Yours; for you is the opportunity, and will you sulk because of one who seems by birth or environment to be more favoured than you are? Will you hang back because of handicaps, fancied or real, when a small-bodied and humbly-born Welshman may rise to stand at the head of all liberal statesmen, when a farmer boy may become a President, and when unnamed private soldiers may make a human levee that holds back a flood of absolutism as the dikes of Holland hold back the North Sea? Will you despise your present ministry because of geographical limitations or because of its smallness when measured by the deeds of others?

There is no excuse for failure, for God is the final arbiter, and He measures a life, not by its accomplishments, but by what it struggles to do; not by the work of its hands alone, but by the motives of its heart.

The kingdom is your kingdom, for yours is the responsibility. No life ever faces an opportunity to render a service without looking into the eyes of moral obligation. Standing at a crowded street-corner in New

York City one day, I saw a blind man hesitating at the sidewalk's edge. Suddenly a Boy Scout leaped "out of the somewhere into the here," and in a moment the stranger was led in safety across Fifth Avenue.

There are blind men everywhere. The world is going it blind to-day. Guides are needed, guides who have all the dash of the Boy Scout and as much information. You are bound, and so am I, in a small corner or in a larger place, and to the utmost of physical strength and moral stamina, to show the way. Any man or any woman who has as much as a handful of the flour of influence, or a thimbleful of the oil of ability, and hoards it in these starving times, is not a Christian, is not a patriot, is a poltroon. We must give, give unto the uttermost, give our all.

The kingdom is your kingdom, for yours are the rewards, and the rewards are unfailing and ample. There is the joy of honest work, of a task well performed. There is no satisfaction greater than that which comes with the consciousness of having completed a project. There is no sleep sweeter than the slumber that follows level-best endeavour, whether your hands have swung an axe in the forest or your mind has chiselled an angel out of marble.

There is the growth of soul that attends all service, the breaking of the bands of prejudice, the laying down of the barriers of narrowness, the developing of a resourceful and beneficent character. I would rather have it said of you, when they put away the tools with which you have gardened in the rich fields of human progress, that you were a great heart than that you garnered a golden harvest.

You have stern problems and hard work before you, but you will not become hard if the prayer with which

you greet each new day has the spirit of the words, "Father of us all, help me this day to love men and women, little children and Thee."

During the great war I heard a brilliant young Canadian lieutenant-colonel say, in a farewell address delivered at a banquet given in his honour by the church of which he was a member, "I do not go into this bloody thing because I want to go; because I have a passion to slay. I go because duty calls me, and I am glad to do my bit. As I try to analyse the conflicting emotions of my heart, I find terror as well as determination. But one great desire I do have, to so carry myself at the front and everywhere that when I come back, if I come back, little children will run to me as confidently as they do to-day."

The kingdom is yours, because the rewards are yours, and the highest reward of all is the "Well done" of heaven. I do not hesitate to tell you that I am working for that. I may miss a certain peace of mind that comes when men speak well of me; but I must not miss His approbation, and I need not. There is no chance for Him to misunderstand me. The judgments of the world are superficial and finite; the judgments of God are infinite; they are "true and righteous altogether."

This leads us naturally to the fact that the kingdom which is our kingdom is also God's kingdom.

> "God's in His heaven;
> All's right with the world."

Does the quotation seem out of place? Does it jar? If it is not true, then where is our hope? At a great convention an international leader of religious thought and activity declared that while in Europe during the war he heard an English diplomat say that a complete

world catastrophe could not be averted "unless God performs a miracle." And God did and God will! He is performing miracles; miraculous beyond the turning of water into wine was the driving from American civilisation of beverage alcohol; miraculous beyond the raising of Lazarus is the new birth of democracy in all the world.

I do not profess to see a way through the present darkness but I do know that there is a way, and that our halting feet will find and tread it. I am not a prophet; I cannot see the end from the beginning. But I have the sure knowledge of the omnipotence of God, an omnipotence that maketh even the wrath of men to praise Him.

Christianity has not failed, for it has been neither understood nor applied. Men called Christians have miserably failed, but Jesus has the only balm for the warsores of the world. The race is on a pilgrimage of discovery; it is the quest of Christ. We have taken the wilderness way of hunger and thirst; of delay and denial; but to-day our backs are against Egypt, and we are moving towards Jordan.

If it were not for the assurance and for the programme of the Christian religion, I should utterly despair. But for our terrible sins we are now atoning. For our iniquitous neglect of the clear teachings of Him who spake as never man spake, for our failure to apply those teachings to governments as well as to individuals, for the money that we have "sluiced out of rivers of blood" we are paying the price.

It is a price vast beyond human comprehension, but who will say that it is too great a price to pay if by it we gain an international conscience; if by it we democratise the last threatening autocratic government; if by

it all states come to accept brotherhood responsibilities, each for the other and the strong for the weak; if by it we learn the truth written in letters of fire and blood above every mined sea and every shell-ploughed field, "Without me ye can do nothing."

Yes, "thou art come to the kingdom," thy kingdom and God's. Come to be a toiler with the infinite in promoting the common good and in making a new earth.

The third fact of the message is the fact of time. "For such a time as this." Already we have appreciated together the stupendous problems to which we are born, problems far more complex and appalling than those confronting the queen whose character is our real message to-day, but problems no less solvable, for they are human problems, and we are labourers together with God.

But first of all, we must go to our knees. First of all, our preparedness for these great tasks must be spiritual. America must be made increasingly worth living for, as well as increasingly worth dying for. And why is a nation worth dying for? Not because of her forests and rivers, not because of her ranges crowded with ore, not because of her ripening harvests and her orchards in full bloom; not because of her busy marts of trade. A nation is worth dying for because of her ideals, because of her spiritual institutions, because she has a soul to save. The challenge of our patriotism to-day, for such a time as this, is the call to a supreme self-surrender for God, for America, and for the world.

If this were the place for an extended survey, we should be bound to discuss at length the grave economic and social crises that have followed the war. Half the

world is hungry to-day, and millions are said to be slowly starving.

While the great war, with the lesser wars following it, is responsible for much of this physical suffering, other and more fundamental causes of waste and inequality have been revealed. Until these causes are squarely faced and honestly dealt with, no superficial juggling with effects can give lasting relief. Sixty per cent of our families are living on incomes of less than $800 annually, when unprejudiced investigators prove that no family can supply itself with essential necessities and comforts and provide properly for its future on less than $1,200 annually.

Apples rot on the trees of Ohio and berries decay on the bushes of Oregon while children lift up the cry of hunger in the streets of New York. Drunken feasts of the parasite rich and bread riots of the helpless poor join their voices to the disgrace of our modern city life. In the mountains of Pennsylvania coal waits while grates are empty in New England and the Middle West.

"God give us men. A time like this demands
Strong minds, great hearts, true faith, and ready hands."

And God is giving men, men and women, unselfish, prophetic, and competent for the leadership and service of this time. Great Britain is wrestling constructively with the liquor octopus of recognised vested rights. America has achieved national prohibition. The slogan, "A Saloonless Nation by 1920," has become the proclamation for a saloonless world. God is giving compensation for our appalling tragedies. The millions

that were under arms have eaten of the tree of knowledge. They have learned their human values and their divine rights. The poor are claiming their birthright of the earth and its fruits; and increasingly the rich are coming to accept their obligations as stewards. In spite of grave moral reactions we believe that upon the common altar of sacrifice raised by the war, where the high and low joined their offerings of blood and treasure, has been kindled a fire that will burn out the dross of economic slavery, and that will light the way to the wiser times of equal opportunity in the benefits of democratic government and in the gifts of nature's God.

"For such a time as this," ghastly, glorious time! There are armies of graves across two hemispheres, and the world is still a charnel-pit. The ruined cities of northern France still bear the marks of never-to-be-forgotten vandalism and the spots of blood that will not out.

But as truly as the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church, so there is a resurrection for every tomb, and a daybreak for every midnight. The path of civilisation rises and dips, but it remains permanently at no lower level. The key-word of the whole social order is progress, not decline. To-morrow will be better than to-day, and we are the builders of the to-morrow.

These are the facts of the mesage: The fact of personality, the fact of place, and the fact of time. The question of the message, the question upon the correct answer to which your whole life waits, is "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" Who has the answer to the question? Who knows?

There are always a number of people who think that

they know,—our friends and our parents, for instance. They may or they may not have the correct judgment of our possibilities. But in other generations class dullards have taken life's prizes, and university honour men have become prodigal sons of learning. Our immediate associates are too close to us to see on all sides of us. Distance gives perspective.

Who knows? Mentally and spiritually lazy people, when confronted with such a problem, are likely to say, "God knows." But shall we satisfy ourselves with "God knows whether I am come to the kingdom for such a time as this"? Men and women, handling every day the service tools of life, in reverence let me say that unless *you* know, the fact of God's omniscience does not matter. Unless *you* have the conviction that for such a time as this you are born, trained, and equipped, the wisdom of the Almighty, in so far as it relates to you, a free moral agent, is a palsied arm.

Some one has said, "Egotism is divine." Egotism may be very foolish, and the word has come to signify obnoxious self-esteem. But no brilliancy, no physical prowess, no mechanical efficiency, no refinement of birth, no indorsement of influential friends, no mere mental equipment, can build for you the life triumphant, unless these are united in you, to your own absolute knowledge, that you have a place to fill in the world, that you have a ministry to perform in your generation, that you are sent of God, that you are come to the kingdom for such a time as this.

Here is the knowledge that is power. Such knowledge is very exalting and very humbling, and those who possess it are the humblers of the mighty. "Know thyself" is the first principle of true wisdom and the secret of success.

None of us should ever cease to be a learner. But our wisdom-gathering must be more than academic. It must be applied. What we already have we must use while each new discovery must be channelled in service; and of wisdom's quest there is no end.

Finally, we must know God, and God's Son, the only sufficient Saviour and Shepherd. We must know Him whom to know aright is eternal life, eternal life for ourselves and for our labours.

I have no apology to make for the last emphasis of the message. In a rocking world, with civilisation peeling her thin veneer, the only mighty fortress is our God. And here faith and knowledge blend. Only the truly wise believe, and only those who from the crumbling foundations man has laid, spring to the Rock of Ages, have wisdom enough to lead us now.

"I know of a world that is sunk in shame,
Where hearts oft faint and tire.
But I know of a name, a name, a name
That can set that world on fire.
Its sound is a brand, its letters flame,
I know of a name, a name, a name,
'Tis Jesus."

Faith, faith in ultimate good because of an unlimited God, is the victory that overcomes the world. Let us anchor our lives here.

5

DEAD KING OR LIVING LORD?

Text: St. Luke 24: 5-6. *"Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen."*

The supreme question of Easter morning is not, "Did Jesus Rise?" but "Is Jesus Risen?" Here joins life's greatest issue. Immortal hope trembles in the balance for us all, as we turn our eyes toward the tomb in Joseph's garden where Mary hurried through the dews of that first Easter dawn, and as we hear again the angels' stupendous declaration, "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen."

What does Easter mean to us? As we look upon that great event and lose the sense of time and space, what does our angel spokesman say? What is the message of the voice,—"He rose," or "He is risen"? He was, or, He is? The tense is everything. Our peace of mind, our happiness, our moral health, depends upon our answer to the question.

There are those who give at least mental assent to the miracle which opened the tomb, but who by their practice deny louder than any words the living Christ. They move with those who, as the day went dark upon the skull-shaped hill, named Him a dead king; they are of the mixed multitude which turned away from his agony, whatever else their judgment may have

been, however well they may have loved, or hated Him, without a promise for their grief or a premonition for their exultation.

The challenge of the ultimatum, then, is "Dead King or Living Lord?" When Pilate wrote the superscription for the cross, "King of the Jews," he was not uncertain of the crucifixion's outcome. He made letters to brand a dead man and not to honour a living ruler. Vascillating, pusillanimous, cowardly and jealous, he would have them acknowledge no personality longer able to dispute with him for public attention and homage. Nor would he have taken the chance of offending the greater Cæsar by acclaiming the wonder-working Jew, had he not already, though to be sure with a certain fearful reluctance, made the destruction of the Nazarine a certainty. Not until the way was cleared to Calvary, not until his own first and entirely selfish objections had been overruled, and God's dear Son was on His Via Crucis, did the nervous Pilate take his stencil in hand. To the Prætor of Rome Jesus was a broken body, a powerless will, a dead king.

And to the church whose priests mixed their hate with spittle to drown His forgiving glances, the church decadent and infidel, straining gnats and swallowing camels, praying at length in public, and in secret short-changing the people:—the church, a tomb of putrid sacrileges, Jesus was a charlatan exposed at last, a repudiated prophet, a popular idol overthrown, a dead king. That His had been a name to conjure with, their very presence at the cross confirmed; their shameful demonstrations proved; but to them His day was ended; His glory was departed:—He was dead.

There were strangers in that mount of suffering, merchants from the far corners of the earth, curiosity-

seekers who came for the spectacle, and who, encouraged by the rumours of this man's miraculous gifts, hoped for a new thrill. Thousands watched that day upon the green hill without the city gate, the painful ascent of the cross, as other thousands watched the "Human Fly" go to his death up the sheer walls of the Martinique in New York City. How these rude fellows must have waited, breathless, for His answer when his temple tormentors cried out in derision, "Come down from the cross," and when they had shaken themselves free of the momentary terror the darkened heavens and other strange manifestations must have inspired; I suppose they sought their lodgings thoughtful, but disappointed, and saying, "Well, whatever he was, he is dead now. Strangely we felt ourselves drawn to Him; Ah! we were sure that He would come down, and even now we somehow believe that He could have come down, but he is a dead king."

And what of the little group which gazed through weeping eyes upon that spectacle,—the faithful John, to whom the royal son bequeathed his mother, and those others who had taken bread from his now pierced hands. And what of her who bore him? woman of infinite woes. Surely these knew! Surely these understood! No! Their judgment, different in quality, was not different in character. They saw a beloved form stiffen; eyes that had so often looked upon them with vast yearning, glaze; hands that had so often carried to the suffering multitudes the touch of healing, become lifeless; the voice that had spoken as never man spake, grow dumb, and as they watched and wept, hope saw no star, for hope was dead, and listening love heard not even "the rustle of a wing." "For as yet," as you will find it written in the 9th verse of the twentieth

chapter of St. John's Gospel, "they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead." And beyond that first Easter morning their great doubt stalked, until Thomas had thrust his fingers into the yet open wounds. Then faith found tongue. Afterwards, came the vindication of history, and the fulfilment of time.

He was not a dead king who commanded the intrepid saints of the early church, who led them out on the most sublime adventures of human experience. He was not a dead king who lit the signal fires of the Pentecostal upper room; who held the gaze of Stephen, when through the showering stones that first Christian martyr lifted his dying eyes to the opening heavens and claimed forgiveness for his murderers. He was not a dead king who took command of Saul of Tarsus, blinded him with lightnings and then thrust him forth to compass the earth with the truths of redemption. He was not a dead king who conquered Rome more completely than did Hannibal or Attila; who made out of a heathen Coliseum a Christian church, and who set up a spiritual empire by the Golden Horn more extensive and potent than the temporal throne of Constantine. He was not a dead king who went before the cross of Augustine, who tamed the fires for Savonarola, who led the Ironsides of Cromwell, who calmed the seas that broke about the prow of the *Half-moon* and eased the waves that washed the decks of the *Mayflower*. He was not a dead king who opened up the wilderness before the circuit rider and gave to the first missionaries the islands of the sea for an inheritance.

John Calvin and John Wesley, Zinzendorf and Luther, Carey and Paton and Morison, Livingstone, Adoniram Judson, Bishop Thoburn and MacKay, Sam

Lapsley and Horace Pitkin, and that numberless company of their faith and kind who accepted the great commission and went forth to make the waste places of superstition and idolatry blossom with the flowers of salvation, followed not the banner of a dead king but marched in the train of a living Lord.

A supreme evidence of the fact that Jesus broke out of His tomb, rose from the dead and conquered death, is this other fact, scarcely less sublime, that men and women live and die for Him and for His cause, and that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church."

The institutions of modern civilisation that are our greatest pride are not monuments of a dead king; they are memorials to a living Lord. And the finest impulse of the human heart, the free and unselfish aspirations of the human mind, the holiest ambitions of the immortal soul, these two thousand years since Pilate wrote that taunt for Israel and had it nailed above the Galilean's thorn-crowned head, have sprung from the deathless fountain opened under the cross for the healing of the nations.

Pilate was wrong; the priests were wrong; the curious onlookers, the disappointed spectators were wrong; the disciples and Mary were wrong. He was not dead when on the cross His body died,—He was the living Lord.

And now we have cleared the way to the more vital matter. He rose. Is He risen? What is the answer?

It is not difficult to be an infidel. A very ordinary mind can doubt, and doubt impressively. To this fact I am a competent witness. Any poor fellow can deny. And beyond this, the times in which we live are fruitful gardens for rank growths of cynicism and discourage-

ment. It takes a far vision to catch the promise of a dawn beyond the moral, the social, the industrial, the international night in which we seem to live.

Nor would I have you think that I refer only to a state of mind when I speak of doubt and denial. The most dangerous infidel is not the one who with his lips denies; it is possible for me to sit in church on Easter Sunday, before the resurrection lilies, joining with affirmation in the creed, and uniting in the hymns of faith, giving mental assent to all the most evangelical of preachers might say, and yet with my life acknowledging not a living Lord, but confirming with Pilate and the priests and the rest, a dead king.

What is my confession on Easter day? Yes, and also what is my confession the following day? What is my life? Do I practise Jesus Christ? And how far have His principles which we declare to be true and righteous altogether possessed the mind and practice of human relationships? Does a dead king lie beneath the Ruhr valley to-day, or shall a living Lord of reconciliation patrol the boundaries of Europe? Will the leaders of capital and labour worship at the tomb of a dead king or listen to the voice of a living Lord? Statesmen and captains of industry, employers and employés, those who sell and those who buy, rich and poor, you and I, must face the great question,—must meet the ultimatum. As individuals and as social units we must meet it, and we must make reply not only with our lips; we must answer with our lives.

Have I confessed a situation that has encouragement for the pessimist? Well, I might go even farther, and confess a sense of at times appalling discouragement, a mood that cries, The Days are evil; the good is dead; the end is worse than the beginning; what's the use?

But then I hear a voice that never fails the ears that strain to hear the bugle of the dawn, "Say not, the days are evil, who's to blame. Stand up, speak out and bravely, in God's name. Be strong."

Against the present chaos in internationalism sounds the Christmas chorus of Bethlehem, and in the awakening, sacrificial conscience, opposed to the futility and wastage of war, I see a star of hope that will shine more and more unto the perfect day of brotherhood. Against the greed of profiteers and the cruelty of the exploiters of weakness, who are satisfied to fill their coffers at the expense of empty bins and scanty larders, appear the ever-increasing number of men and women who measure their profits by the Golden Rule, and who share their power.

"Say not the days are evil," nor advertise the mote of infidelity in others, unless and until you have taken the beam of selfishness or idleness or injustice or idolatry out of your own eye; unless and until you have joined yourself to that goodly and growing company that challenges the evil and battles the wrong.

I know a man whose name a little while ago was on the lips of millions. He is drilling an oil well. He is the kind of an adventurer men call by another name, "wildcatter." He of course is sure that he will find flowing gold. Perhaps he will. At any rate, he will deserve to; he has sold no stock and has interested no one with him who cannot afford to share disappointment as well as success. And where, always before, I believe, the rule of work in oil fields has been the seven day week and the twelve hour day,—the latter being two shifts, he has introduced another policy,—six days a week, but with pay for seven, and eight hours a day, with the added expense of three shifts instead of two,

for twenty-four hours. Seasoned oil men call him a fool; he knows it, and smiles. I call him a pioneer and a Christian. I think of him when I read my Easter lesson, and thinking of him it is not hard to say, "He is risen."

Not long ago I sat in an old trading post, built from adobe and hewn logs. It stands a hundred miles from the nearest railroad, at Chin Lee, near the mouth of Canyon de Chelly, and six miles below the famous white house of a thousand rooms—that prehistoric cliff-dwelling which housed an industrious people before the foundations of the pyramids were laid down. Now the old post is a mission church, and in it several times every week gather the Christian Navajos. I talked to my dark-skinned, desert brothers as I would talk to you.

I wish that you might know them as I have come to know them;—their children, their herds, their *hogans*. I wish that you might see the changes wrought by the spirit of the living Christ that I have witnessed; that you, too, might compare the pagan who still exists in filth and fear, with his neighbour whom God hath healed and who lives now with a countenance of light in a home which fully vindicates the theory that cleanliness is next to Godliness.

I talked with William Gorman, one of the most prosperous and intelligent of the Navajos. He is a fine and handsome man. His wife, his sons and daughters are worthy of him. I met him first when, seeing our automobile in distress, he hurried across his fields and helped dig us out of the sand. He has visited the great cities and has been the spokesman of his people in Washington.

We talked of many things,—this dark-skinned Pres-

byterian elder of a struggling Indian church set in the mighty desert stillness. We talked of the new adobe house of prayer with the manse the heroic missionary and his little band have slowly raised by their own hands; of the bell they some day hope to have to peal its golden message down the *arroyas* and across the mesas. William Gorman (his Navajo name you would not understand) loves those tiny buildings with a peculiar affection, for he it was who pled with Secretary Lane of President Wilson's cabinet for the privilege of erecting them,—pled eloquently and successfully against bitter opposition.

And then, at last, through the interpreter (for William Gorman speaks no English) I asked a question that brought a flood of words. With glowing eyes, rich and rapid voice and gesticulating hands, he spoke of his personal Christian experience; of his old fears and evil doings, of how as a lad he prayed to the river, the mountain, the bear, the coyote, the lion, and the sun; of how he had once lived as his neighbours lived, and then of the great change that came. When he told of his Christian faith he became so impressive that we who sat in that rude room caught the sense of an unseen, benign presence, as he concluded, "And all of this I do fully believe."

Sir, if you have somewhere, somehow, lost your faith, come with me to the great open places, to the vast silences where God still speaks as from the burning bush. I remember my Navajo friends and their church as I read again the Easter message. Not a dead king but a living Lord has changed and now commands William Gorman and his house.

For me this is the message of Easter, and while it underlies and undergirds the entire structure of Chris-

tian faith, while it is the most profound theological element of our religion, it has a warmth in its personal application, an intimate tenderness that makes it a balm of Gilead to a wounded spirit, and a song in the night to a sorrowing soul. When we stand beside the graves of our departed, while winter winds of death blow chill about us, we have the promise of another springtime, for He is risen.

We know that, as the blossoms bud and bloom and fade; then lift their heads again in fairer forms, so we shall rise. Then, when at last we close our eyes upon these scenes and fold our hands from work, we do not die; that we but pass from work to greater work. Because He lives, we shall live also.

Jesus Christ is not a dead king. In spite of time and change, with all the ardour of my youth, those years when faith first came to build an altar in my heart, I answer all my doubts and silence all my fears with "He is Risen."

6

REMEMBER JESUS CHRIST

Text: II Timothy 2:8. *"Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, of the seed of David, according to my gospel."*

Love is memory's great compulsion, and next to love is remorse. We cannot forget when we love, and until love has covered them we always remember our sins.

Does the text arrangement then seem arbitrary and unwarranted? "Remember Jesus Christ?" Is it not altogether unnecessary to say, Remember Jesus; to admonish against forgetting the Christ? Do you smile at the very thought of the world, of any of us, ever forgetting Him?

Is it not like warning a son not to forget his mother; to remember the hands that held him close against the warm breasts of his babyhood; the eyes that lingered upon his first efforts to break the shackles of his infancy's helplessness; the voice that sang him to sleep; that called him from his play; that comforted his grief and admonished his wrong-doings:—the one above all others who believed in him; hoped for him, communed with him? How unnecessary to say to you, "Remember Mother."

Is it not like admonishing a man to keep in mind the mother of his children; the woman who shares his bitter and his sweet, who feels more deeply than he does his

reverses, and who is the genius of his triumphs? Is it not like saying, Husband, remember your wife; or, Son, remember your father; or, Woman, remember your dearest, your truest, most unselfish friend? As I think in these terms of the text I catch myself repeating fragments of the old song, "How can I forget Him? How can I forget Him? He's done so much for me."

Nor can I. Not until I forget the holiest recollections of childhood, youth and young manhood, can I ever forget Jesus Christ. It is a mental impossibility for me to blot out the memory of him. Not even were I to will to forget, could I; for again and again I have been reminded that memory is not subject to will.

Nor can the world forget Him. He stands at every cross-road of her progress. He is at the centre of every great spiritual impulse that thrusts civilisation upward; cathedrals that have stood a thousand years crumble in an hour under the concentrated fire of long-distance guns. But the One who raised them by the hands of men His sacrifice inspired, stands unscarred, unshrunken, and unobscured. He has enemies, but none who match His strength. Many deny His authority, but even they must walk in the light He carries; and His rivals are as children who puff up their cheeks to blow out the sun.

Why then the text?—because in this case it serves to concentrate our gaze upon the central figure of the great truth we wish to emphasise. Remember Jesus Christ, and in particular remember these things about Him:—these characteristics that belong to Him; "Remember Jesus Christ of the seed of David; raised from the dead."

First, remember that Jesus Christ was a man. Re-

member that Jesus Christ was a human being; that He was flesh, bone, blood; mind to think and grieve and rejoice; body to grow and suffer; that He was like as we are. Remember this to-day. Is it unnecessary to say as much as has already been said? Frankly, I often have greater difficulty with the humanity of Jesus than with the divinity of Jesus. This is especially true during the weeks of His growing passion. "Love so amazing, so divine. Can it be?" and can it be that a man, a human being, possessed it? Small wonder that the first heretics in the church were not those who denied that Jesus was God, but those who refused to believe that He was or could have been human. It was the Gnostic that the early church first drove out; those who met the embarrassment of His visible presence by the shores of Galilee and in the earthly counsels of men by saying that He only seemed to have a human form, that His apparent flesh and blood were only a phantom, that His suffering and His death were not reality. Apollonaris was not an infidel in the sense that we now regard the word; nor was he a unitarian. The deity of Jesus Christ He did not question, but His humanity he did absolutely deny. Our text to-day is not a covered word; in it is no hidden meaning. Remember Jesus Christ of David's seed; descendant of a long earthly line, fruit of a woman's womb, babe of a woman's travail pain. Remember Jesus Christ, the man, and of all men the most human.

And so remembering him, remember that He had man's limitations. We know by the record that He could be hungry, hungry for friends, as well as for food; hungry for fellowship and understanding, as well as for drink; that because He had the limitations of a man He could not, physically speaking, be in two

places at the same time. Lazarus died in His absence. Remember that because He was a man he could not go on without weariness; that because He was a man, a flesh-and-blood creature, He could not escape temptation; tempted in all points like as we are, was Jesus.

We know that because He came as a normal babe, so He grew as a normal child; as the Scripture has it, "He increased," increased in stature, increased in intellect. He was wiser at twelve than He was at two, and wiser at thirty than He had been when He confounded the temple priests. Do we seem to commit ourselves at this point to a moot question? Do we raise the issue as to what Jesus would have been had He lived a decade longer than He did;—that is, would he have been wiser at forty than He was at thirty? Well, moot questions of this sort do not trouble me, and I have small patience with those who spend their time in communion with them.

I know that Jesus completed a perfect work at thirty-three, and am satisfied that there He reached His physical, his human perfection. The essential matter is that He increased while He lived; that He grew in all of His human attributes; that He was not handed down from heaven in all of his final perfections. Yes, remember, remember, all of you, that Jesus was of David's seed; that like as we came, He came; that by the upward way of our youth, struggle, temptation and development, He climbed; and, climbing, reached the heights of manhood's perfection. And that now from these heights He calls down to us, calls with invitation and a promise, "Follow me."

But this text has two parts, it is in halves. Remember Jesus Christ, of David's line; do not forget His manhood; and, also remember Jesus Christ who was

raised from the dead, who broke from Joseph's tomb as a giant breaks from a shackle of straw. If Easter is not a lie, then Jesus is more than a man, more than any man.

Remember Jesus Christ, *the* Son of God, with emphasis upon the definite article; remember that He so confessed Himself when He confirmed Pilate's inquiry with "Thou hast said," and when He even more specifically declared, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father; the Father and I are one." And were I to deny the claim of Jesus Christ at this point, I often wonder how I could believe in God at all, at least in a God of fatherly consideration and love. God, who created the world and all worlds; God, who set up the universe and the universes; who organised the precession of the equinoxes, who made life out of His purpose and then at last allowed a situation in which nature destroys her own children, a situation in which cold becomes cruelty and heat a blistering torture, and in which man follows his divinely ordained passions into selfishness and lust. It is easier for me to believe in Jesus Christ as God than it would be to believe in God the Father without Jesus Christ.

And of course it was to meet this very difficulty, this very situation in man, that Gód sent His only begotten Son; Jesus came to reveal the Father; to make Him clear; to bring Him nigh; to prove Him as love,—love unto sacrifice, love unto death, and vastly more, love unto everlasting life. You may say, sir, it is hard; it is impossible to understand His nature, both human and divine; or you may go as far as some who it seems to me should know better, and say, He cannot be both God and man. And I will grant you that in terms of human reason, as to all the details, it is hard

if not quite impossible to understand; that truly now we see through a glass darkly.

But I am bound to say that with all the facts before me, I cannot believe anything else. I am forced to faith; His humanity is a historical fact; Jesus Christ was as Cæsar was; as Napoleon was; as Lincoln was; and His divinity, His deity, with me are unescapable conclusions if He ever lived at all. For he lived as never man lived; He spoke as never man spoke; He healed as never man healed; He died as never man died; He rose as never man rose; He lives now as never man has lived.

The great truth of the incarnation, the fact that God came into human life, as He was in Jesus Christ, is easier for me now than the doubt of that fact, and do not, oh, do not go out misled into believing that my way in faith has been one of easy grades. Out of my own experience I am trying to translate for you what this text has come to mean to me. Has come to mean, I say, for unto this day I have struggled against all the odds that you have faced; I have wrestled with all the questions in your minds; I have fought for every conviction and assurance, which I now possess.

But we are to remember something more to-day than the great, the central truths that Jesus Christ was man, and that at the same time Jesus Christ was God. We are to remember that we are to be like Him. That we are to be perfect as He is perfect, is the supreme declaration of this profound principle. We know of course that this is our ultimate goal which now is hid with Christ in God. But that it has very direct implications for this present life we must not overlook. At this point some find the basis for a great error; they say "He was God's son but so are we, and as He was God's

son so we are; or may become. Just as, in a sense (they go on) God became incarnate in Jesus, so He will become life within us. It is only a matter of degree. He is our example, our invitation, our inspiration; He is a good man, incomparably better, perhaps than any other who has ever lived; but certainly He is not God. Let us emulate Him."

With these scholars I must and do part company. We are sons of God; we are heirs with Jesus Christ, and joint heirs, but we are not sons as Jesus was the Son. If he were merely a perfect man, to ask any person to be like Him would be piffle; it would be like ordering a cripple to become like Sandow, or a disfigured imbecile like a queen of beauty, or a deaf and dumb man to become a Caruso. It is God in Christ who makes the invitation for us to become like Jesus, to become like Jesus more and more unto the perfect day, a reasonable request; a glorious invitation, and a divine assurance. Christ in us is our hope of glory; not the Christ who was a man, man of our manhood and limitations, but the Christ of God.

To-day as you look back upon your failures, as you remember your transgressions, remember Jesus Christ. Remember that you may correct your ways; find forgiveness for your sins; that from the dead things of yesterday you may have a glorious resurrection. Why? Because and only because "He is thy life," because and only because in Him even though we have been for a long time dead in trespasses and sins, we become alive forever more. Men and women, let the call of every Communion service be a call to the great confession; your confession of Jesus Christ as Lord and King.

But there is another word that must not be overlooked. What does it mean to fail of remembering

Jesus Christ? Not to remember Jesus Christ is to forget God, and to forget God is self-destruction. We turn with horror from the suicide; but moral and spiritual suicides are all about us. What a vast wreckage human society carries upon the open seas of its life! How hapless and hopeless are the souls without faith in Jesus Christ. And I am reminded that the application of this principle is not confined to individuals. The nation that sinneth, it shall die; the government that blasphemes God, it shall perish; Soviet Russia could have sinned against every sound economic principle and perhaps survived; debased her currency and still held at least the allegiance of her own people; cursed the governments of her rivals and remained immune from foreign attack. But Soviet Russia cannot blaspheme God and live; her own people will forge weapons of a terrible vengeance in the white fires of their deathless religious instincts; forge them even though their churches be desecrated and their priests slain; forge them and use them.

And let us not in fancied isolation and proud selfishness feel a false security.

This is to me the message of the day when we gather about the table of His remembrance:—when together in the bonds of a deathless fellowship we eat and drink, showing forth His death and resurrection:—*Remember Jesus Christ.*

7

WHAT THE DEVIL ASKED

Text: Job 1:9. *"Doth Job fear God for naught?"*

"Doth Job fear God for naught?" are the words of the devil which might be stated in their converse and modernised form, "What's his price?" The prince of darkness is frankly of the opinion that Job, whose outward goodness he does not deny, is merely keeping the bond, returning God service,—unusual service, to be sure,—but for very unusual temporal and spiritual blessings received by divine favour.

"Hast thou not made a hedge about him?" continues Satan, pressing his contention, "and about his house and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands and his substance is increased in the land,"—"but put forth thy hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face." In other words, "Certainly Job is religious; but Job is prosperous. Impoverish him and watch him revert to type; let him know bitterness and sorrow, and he will become another devil."

Also we see the inference that godliness inspired by selfishness is worthless, that it is a counterfeit; and good doctrine this certainly is even when the devil becomes its mouthpiece. The eminent Scottish divine, Dr. Watkinson, has said, "The devil's theology is usually orthodox; his failure is elsewhere." At this

point one might well paraphrase the immortal words of an heroic nurse, and say, "Theology is not enough."

And now to those who have followed the exquisitely written story of Job, one of the literary masterpieces of all masterpieces, unfolds the travail of the soul; and the torture of the body of this man who stands for all ages as the epitome of faithfulness and the sum of human virtues. Have you found any test he was not called upon to meet? Ah, there was not one link of weakness in his armour; he survived, came off more than conqueror, gave the lie to Lucifer; vindicated God; won the victor's crown.

I wonder whether we accept the principle; whether we believe this story of the man of many trials, or whether the ancient riddle has a certain fascination for us: "Does Job fear God for naught?"—has every man his price? What think you? Cynical days these are, we say. Why I read,—but what's the use? I read and you read—what? the current jazz of public life; the lurid tale of spectacular moral failure; not the wholesome best nor the average commonplace. We wait here for reasoned truth. Does Job fear God for naught? Not the addle-headed chaser after latest fads. Does Job, the representative man of affairs, the churchman of repute,—does he serve God for naught? Are all men, or most men, average, home-making men, liars? That's the question. What of the underpinning of society? its foundations?

Once a friend said as we talked in the lobby of a hotel, "Come downstairs and watch Young America in the dance of death." As he spoke, he looked at me half-mockingly. Presently we saw them,—a hundred, perhaps two hundred, hardly more,—about crowded tables, and then when the music began we saw them

hurrying to the cleared centre of the great room:—mere boys and girls, many of them; they belonged at home (I wonder how many had no fit homes). I loathe the steps they seemed to revel in; I find it hard at such times to keep these two hands off the necks of the gray-haired roués who now and then appear upon the scene. I tremble for the boyhood and the girlhood of the land, and, thinking of my own, pray God with agony of soul, to save them from the body of such death.

But I have no time for certain implications of the devil's riddle. I turned to my friend a little later, and said, "You wouldn't care to say that all, nor nearly all, nor many of those lassies and those lads are evil?" He waited, and I continued, "And I am glad when I watch them that God reminds me that the population of the metropolitan area of New York is nine millions."

And his face sobered as he came upon a new thought. How few there are, after all, who live out at the moral extremes of society, even in New York! Listen, it so happens that my friendship circle which, because of circumstances in my ministry that have made me a wanderer on the face of the earth is very wide, does not, to my knowledge, include a husband and wife separated by law; nor a man who committed murder. It has in it ghastly figures of suffering and grief and sin; and standing out like a rugged peak of renunciation, confession and transformation, is one man who betrayed a trust; confessed a crime; served a sentence in a federal prison, and then returned to his own people to win back all that he had lost, and more.

I distrust the individual to-day who persists in saying, with a knowing half-leer: "He has his price,—if you can find it"; "You can get him if you go after

him right." That man says more than he realises; tells too much about himself. "Does Job fear God for naught?" I believe in Job.

Every man who serves God, serves Him for naught. Any man who in selfishness puts a price on his labour when he turns to the Architect of the universe, in reply to the "help-wanted" advertisement of the eternities, finds himself without work, not because the work is done and not because the Master of the workmen is unreasonable, or unwilling, but because he himself has laid down a condition that not even God can meet. A religion dependent upon temporal rewards is not true religion; is not Christian; for religion is an experience of the soul, and the soul cannot live on bread and meat and physical reward. There were those who followed Jesus because He distributed fish and cakes; not a small company they made: but they did not fear Him, love Him, serve Him, and in reality these got nothing from Him.

The gifts of God are different; they are unique. Cakes and fish are found in many shops. No, the multitude that came out from the towns to sit at His feet and munch sandwiches, those who came for that purpose had scarcely managed their last swallow, before they were howling, "Crucify Him." Those who fear, who serve God, serve Him for naught. It took the disciples some time to discover this; they quarrelled over the seats they desired to occupy in the Heavenly kingdom; they had not learned the lesson when Calvary reared its skull-shaped head above their path; but they learned it! They learned it! Does Job fear God for naught? Ask Stephen and Peter and John and Paul!

But religion and worldly prosperity very frequently

go forward hand in hand. Job is not the only man who has been both rich and godly; honoured and honest. Nor is poverty necessarily a sign of purity, or misfortune a mark of godliness. Other things being equal, a Christian ought to have a better chance for honest temporal success than a sinner. I am fully persuaded that honesty,—plain, old-fashioned honesty,—is the best policy. But no Christian asks God to give him an automobile, a bank account, a cabinet position, or domestic felicity, as a return for being Christlike. And it is equally true that the graces and the unique powers of religion cannot be purchased. You perhaps recall the disillusionment of Simon the Sorcerer: "Now when Simon," the Scripture runs, "saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money . . . but Peter said unto him, Thy silver perish with thee, because thou hast sought to obtain the gift of God with money." Profit and piety are, as another has said, "utterly irreconcilable in religious thought and motive, although they are often and naturally coincident in practical life."

The rewards of God for those who truly serve Him, the rewards that do not wait for eternity, are spiritual, and therefore abiding. The Christian may not be assured temporal blessings or even physical immunities, because he is a Christian; he may even see the ungodly man favoured in his storehouse and market above the children of light. But he is assured attention and approbation,—divine attention and approbation. God looketh upon a good man with approval; a good man findeth favour in his sight. To those who love God such attention and such approbation mean infinitely more than gold.

I have a friend whose grandfather was a Virginia slave-owner before the Civil War. When that dark tragedy of divided households settled down upon the land, he donned a uniform of grey and went out to give his youth, his all, to his state. Behind him were the holiest values of his life,—a young wife and an infant son. In the sad days which followed, the time came when the darker evils of war,—fear, the fear of violence and hunger, starvation,—approached the white house in which the young mother and her helpless child sat in their agony of waiting. Then two negroes, a black woman and a black man, two of the new freemen, refused the gift of emancipation, scorned the alluring promises of their old plantation associates, and without a promise or a hope of reward stood guard over that distracted home. They tended the pitiful crops; they kept the fires upon the hearth and the milk in the crocks; they filled the long winter evenings with their songs and in the bosom of their childlike faith nourished the soul, comforted the mind of their mistress whose love was often close to despair.

When after Appomattox the husband and father returned, a broken and penniless man, and found them standing guard, the only reward that he could offer them was gratitude,—gratitude unutterable, unmeasurable. But that was all he could have paid them had he come back a millionaire. Their cup of happiness overflowed; only a few years ago that old master, a grey-haired Confederate veteran, stood in the Senate of his state and said, "When I am tempted to doubt my God and my fellowman, I wander in memory, if not in fact, to the private burial plot behind the house where I was born, and stop beside two graves, the graves that hold the sacred dust of my coloured mammy and her

son, who kept the greater curse of war from my loved ones while I fought, who without a thought of gain scorned freedom and risked their lives, because they loved me and my people. I never paid them because I never could, and because I understood." The highest reward is the attention and approbation of one we love and the greatest gift a man may receive is God's recognition and understanding.

Men and women, there are relationships and associations in life which are "desecrated" by the very thought of temporal profit, of worldly gain. Let us paraphrase that text again; "Does a mother serve her children for naught?" What conditions your attitude toward your child? Have you ever stopped to analyse your feelings toward your son or your daughter? Why do you love them, plan for them, dream for them, worry about them, toss restless upon your sleepless bed pondering the problems that affect them? Why? Because they will repay you some day, somehow? You don't even give consideration in seriousness to my query.

I say, there are relationships in life that are desecrated by the very thought of profit, temporal gain. Is friendship conditioned upon cash returns? God pity you if yours is, for then you have never possessed a friend. Some years ago a Boston man of wealth was approached by one of his long-time associates with the request for a loan. The man approached, hesitated for a moment and then said, "I can't loan you money; for I won't think of you in terms of business. You may be willing that I should, but I can't afford to. Take the money and let me forget it. Then if you can't forget, give it back some day when I'm not looking." The man may have been lacking in sound business judgment, but I am bound to believe that his

instinct was sound, that it did not lead him astray, for there are relationships which are desecrated by the very thought of gain.

The highest achievements in science, the most sublime creations in art, have been the children of the womb of poverty, and of the lap of unselfish sacrifice.

Another has said, "It is only when we serve God for naught that we discover the infinite riches God's naught stands for." The affairs of the heart; the arrangements of genius; the high adventures of the human mind; the conquests of the immortal soul;—these occupy realms among the relationships which are desecrated by the very thought of temporal gain. And I say to you that human nature is capable of far more disinterestedness than we give it credit for. Don't doubt your fellows:—trust them; believe in them. Of course you will be disappointed in some and deceived in others; disappointed and deceived in the future as you have been in the past. But keep on believing. Make it a habit of your mind; the exercise will enrich and beautify your own soul and it will make others better than they ever dreamed they could become. God only knows how much of cleansing in my heart has been accomplished by the faith that my friends have dared repose in me. God trusts us! Let us emulate His spirit, and trust each other. Down with the devil's riddle, and its unsavory satellites of cynicism and suspicion.

Do you say, 'Ah, well, one never knows, though, until the test comes. Job without the boils is not Job. To be sure, but by the goodly examples that Job and the rest have set out before us, I elect to believe, to believe, —not to doubt; to believe, until Job by his failure in the test proves the implications of the devil's riddle, to

be true and not to doubt, to doubt with soul-destroying cynicism and miserable speculations, until the persecuted hero, surrounded by his mockers and false friends, has vindicated himself.

Job is a supreme illustration of the fact that supreme characters are revealed only by great ordeals, and frequently great ordeals reveal individuals we had appraised as commonplace or ordinary, as supreme. I remember a Victoria Cross captain of the Gordon Highlanders whom I met in London during the war. He was having his first leave in three years; had just returned from the front in Mesopotamia. We travelled as far as Glasgow together. When the war opened he was a second-rate pugilist. One of the characters I remember best of all those glorious fellows I came to know in France had been a shoe salesman in a small central western town. I cannot think of him without a warm glow flooding my soul. Does Job fear God for naught? Absolutely yes, Mr. Devil. You don't know it; you can't know, but there are relationships and dedications in life which are desecrated by the very thought of gain.

Finally, we will not overlook the fact that Job, not God, answered the devil's question, the question Satan asked of the Heavenly Father. And Job answered, not as speaks a witness in the chair, but with his life. Job answered with ruined crops and burned storehouses, a broken household and a diseased, festering body. Yes, Job's answer cost much, and nearly all.

Do I serve God for naught, or have I named my price? I rather think that the question is especially timely for the minister to-day, and I have been thinking about it in the light of an old experience. Years ago a young preacher stood in the combination parlour,

dining-room and sitting-room of a small home missionary parsonage, stood in front of a small air-tight wood stove with a letter in his hand. He was slowly reading the letter to his wife. It was to the man a remarkable communication,—a call to a city church and to a salary of $1,500.00—exactly five times the salary he was then receiving, a call to personal opportunity in study, to the fellowship with kindred spirits and to the pride of preaching.

As he finished reading he looked beyond his young wife and out through the window to the half-finished church building. The carpenters had laid down their tools when he had picked up that letter to read it to his wife! The little house in which he stood, his hands had nailed together; and now his eyes dropped to the slight figure of the beautiful girl in front of him, the bride he had led three thousand miles from home and kindred to share with him the hardships of a pioneer life.

What he found in those steadfast, unfaltering eyes of brown must have reassured him, for he reached out and drew her into the circle of his arm, lifted the top of the old air-tight stove and with a melodramatic flourish, an air of high mock tragedy, he dropped the "call" into the flame that leaped up to receive it. That was years ago, but to the eyes of one who saw it all, the picture of the strong man and the beautiful woman, and the letter falling into the stove, will never fade.

Doth Job fear God for naught? There are some things that the very thought of gain desecrates.

8

THE GRIP THAT HOLDS

Text: St. Matthew 17:20. *"If ye have faith . . . nothing shall be impossible unto you."*

Years ago I went with a famous Indian artist and others on a fishing and picture expedition into the Cascade Mountains in Oregon. One afternoon, near the head waters of the Hood River, a few miles below the Hood River Glacier, I had an experience out of which this message comes.

Our party had for several miles followed the "hurricane-deck" of a precipitous range of lesser mountains, when it became necessary to descend to the river level for a greatly desired picture. The two United States forest-rangers who were piloting us began cautiously to drop downward. After a time, being somewhat familiar with the country generally, and growing impatient with our slow progress, I started off alone by what I thought to be a more direct and an easier way.

The region of the Cascades, in which we were, abounds in great ledges and slides of decomposed or "rotten" granite. Often what at first appears to be a safe and sound path crumbles suddenly beneath the climber's feet. I had taken only a few steps from my companions when my footing failed, and, sprawling headlong, I shot over the ledge. I still have very vivid

recollections of how that thread of a river looked with its spray dashing into mist against jagged, up-reaching rocks, several hundred feet below.

But, fortunately for my story, a kind Providence had timed and directed my fall. Out from the sheer wall of the cliff at my "point of departure" grew a sturdy little mountain-pine. For five miles in either direction I have scanned that mountain-side for a similar growth,—in vain. It was the *one* place where my acrobatic demonstration could be completed without the assistance of an undertaker. Madly I hurled myself upon the tiny tree. Its twisted trunk was scarcely larger than my two wrists. I clutched it with my hands. I entwined it with my limbs, and prayed that it might not fail,—and all this in a winged second of time that was an eternity of fear. The tree held!

After my horror-stricken companions had lifted me to safety, and I had recovered my nerve sufficiently to complete the journey,—*following the guide,*—I stood by the boiling, thundering stream, and looked up at the little tree. Gnarled, stunted, scarred by the rocks of avalanches, it was not a thing of beauty; but I am sure that you will understand me when I say that it looked better to me than any lordly sequoia of the forest.

Out of that mountain experience, so nearly a tragedy, has come to my life a message well worth the terror of the ordeal—a message of faith, a message of power for service, a message of triumph,—the message of *the grip that holds.*

A tiny seed falls into the narrow crevice of a mighty granite cliff. The warmth of the sun-heated stone opens a way for the first eager rootlet. The rootlet follows the moisture-widened seam into the very breast

of the precipice. It grows, strengthens, and multiplies. It forces new chambers, establishes new strongholds for itself, and its fellows. The tree develops. It beats away the unfriendly storm, and hardens in the tempest. When spring opens, and slides thunder down upon it from the upper heights, it fastens itself the more firmly in the heart of the mountain. And, when it stands between the plunging body of a careless man and broken ledges far below, it does not fail; its grip holds.

Tradition

What is the grip that holds? It is the grip of *tradition.* Tradition handles the strong man as a nurse handles the babe; and it is master of trades, industries, labour, and systems of business. It is the director of our simplest habits; it clothes us, shaves us, feeds us, and smiles for us. It gowns woman. It says, "Yes," for the child, and "No." It is polite and impolite; circumspect and cruel; it is good and it is bad. Here it binds a church with the usages of yesterday, and holds her eyes closed to the larger meaning of "Feed my lambs," while yonder it fastens a potentially great philanthropy in the groove of mere charity.

Only a few years ago tradition called the Wright brothers fools. Tradition said the world was flat, and sent snapping curs and mobs tapping their foreheads after a certain citizen of Genoa who declared that the world was round. Tradition says that things are and will be, because they were. It is the friend of both good and evil, and frequently the enemy of better and best.

How strong is the grip of tradition? He knows who has struggled to break it. Statesman, teacher, artist, inventor, prophet, reformer, business man, and schoolboy,—these all have felt its heavy hand. We are all in the grip of tradition. And he who breaks the grip of tradition where it is evil, is every whit a man.

But there are worthy traditions, kindly, smiling, holy traditions. There are landmarks of faith and practice; there are traditions of truth and hope; there are treasured memories, and habits of prayer and ministry that are as the perfect fruits of an unscarred tree. Men do well to be held in the groove of an ethical standard that a less complex business life fixed; men do well to cherish the prejudice against a lie and the reverence for liberty that opened wounds in the bodies of their fathers; men do well to honour an ancient virtue by the continued application of its truth. Tradition has bands that can be broken only with infinite loss to mankind.

Knowledge

What is the grip that holds? The grip that holds is the grip of *knowledge*. The world has no successful protest or argument against knowledge. The world surrenders to the man who knows. Generally men and women fail in business or politics because they do not know. "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." The call of industry, the call of the church, the call of public life everywhere, is for men and women who know. The greatest discovery that any man ever makes is the discovery of himself, his strength and weakness, his true relation to life.

Emerson has said that no great task is ever accom-

plished without enthusiasm, and there can be no lasting fervour of enthusiasm without knowledge. No man becomes greatly in earnest over a proposition with which he is not thoroughly familiar. *Information* plus *inspiration* multiplied by *perspiration* equals *consummation;* this is the equation of victory.

A few generations ago the Northwest was an unknown and unappreciated country to the East. The president of the United States announced that it was not worth a struggle with England. Daniel Webster said that it was not worth while because the day would never come when a railroad would cross the Rockies; that the Oregon country was forever too far removed from the centres of world-trade.

But Marcus Whitman with his "golden-haired Narcissa" "farther than flew the imperial eagles of Rome," journeyed from New England to his life's work on the Columbia. He saw the great rivers crowded with fish, the mighty mountains crowned with forests of emerald, the far-stretching, fertile valleys, and the sunset ocean with its fabulous commerce of centuries to be. He came to know what others had not dreamed of.

Marcus Whitman was a patriot as well as a missionary; he loved his country; and, when there reached his ears the Hudson Bay traders' whispered plottings, he turned his pony's head toward Washington. Across a frozen continent he rode, the mightiest ride of history.

Reaching Washington after unspeakable hardships, he told his story. So well did he tell it, because he *knew,* that the president's mind was changed, Daniel Webster's mind was changed, and in the early spring the intrepid pioneer, preacher and patriot turned his face again toward the Northwest, this time at the head

of the first caravan of settlers to cross the great Western wilderness.

Ah, what a journey it was! The rivers were full of rotten ice, and there was no grass on the prairies. The Indians were unfriendly, and the passes of the Rockies were still choked with snow. Often the faint-hearted murmured, and would have turned back. But in the hours of deepest gloom Marcus Whitman stood before his followers and told them of the Oregon country. With flaming eyes and burning cheeks he told them of great rivers, fertile valleys, and the far-reaching sea. And always he pointed to the flag. *He knew.*

They did not turn back. They followed on and on. Some died and were buried in that first, unmarked Oregon trail; but those "heralds of empire" fixed their faces as a flint on the sunset. They possessed the land, and to-day the Stars and Stripes has four stars, Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana, because Marcus Whitman *knew*.

Faith

What is the grip that holds? *Faith* is the grip that holds. Not tradition, for tradition is broken and set aside; not knowledge, for knowledge "passeth away" and the present knowledge becomes to-morrow's tradition. The world surrenders to the man who knows, but heaven and earth belong to the man of faith.

What do we know? How much absolute knowledge have we to-day? The farmer plants the seed, tends the crop, gathers the harvest, without knowing the chemistry of the grain. The motorman drives the electric car without having fathomed the mystery of

the electric fluid; and how it goes even Edison knows not, but he knows that it goes! We see results and effects; our knowledge of causes, our real knowledge, is limited. And how little we know of what we really may know! How many legs has a fly?

We sit, we eat, we stand, we walk, we ride, by faith. "We live by faith." The man who denies God because he cannot understand Him is one of the most inconsistent fellows in the world, because he continues to live, and who has explained life? My best things, my holiest treasures, are those intangible, mysterious gifts, that mortal mind has never fathomed—friendship, my mother's smile, the love of the mother of my children, faith, God.

Faith sent messages under the sea years before the first Atlantic cable was laid. Faith has bridged every great river and opened every deep mine. Faith tunnelled the Hudson and dug the Panama Canal. Faith finds a desert and leaves a waving wheat-field, a blossoming orchard, a garden in full bloom. Faith swings the cranes of industry, raises cities in the wilderness, outlives oppression, advances steadily the whole social order, and lifts men and women above angels. Faith is the only bridge that ever spanned the grave, the only knight who ever conquered death.

Faith spoke, and Abraham journeyed into the west, pitching his tent and building his altars. Faith spoke, and Moses led Israel out of Egypt, and gave the world her laws. Faith spoke, and science brought inventions and medicine and great learning and a million helpful things and dropped them into the outstretched hands of the race. Faith spoke, and kingdoms rose and fell as Faith willed. Faith spoke, and the Bible was opened, the Magna Charta was given, the western

world was discovered, and liberty found a new name. Faith spoke, and Washington led the ragged Continentals from Lexington to Yorktown. Faith spoke, and Abraham Lincoln by way of Appomattox and his own Golgotha guided the republic through tempestuous seas of slavery and disunion into the safe harbour of "liberty and union, now and forever, one and inseparable." Faith spoke, and the Galilean freed the souls of men from time's beginning to its end.

And faith is speaking, and faith will speak,—will speak until labour and capital understand each other; until business is firmly established in its just profits, and the man who toils with his hands enjoys an adequate return for the sweat of his brow; until little children are no longer sacrificed to mines and factories, and the virtue of women is no longer bartered to the lust of man; until the comity of nations is no longer a theory alone, but spreads over all the earth in a benign mantle of peace and brotherhood. "If ye have faith nothing shall be impossible unto you."

Joaquin Miller might well have given his "Columbus" another name, and called it "Faith."

"Behind him lay the grey Azores,
Behind the gates of Hercules;
Before him not the ghost of shores,
Before him only shoreless seas.
The good mate said, 'Now must we pray,
For lo! the very stars are gone;
Brave Admiral, speak, what shall I say?'
'Why, say, "Sail on! sail on! and on!"'

"'My men grow mutinous day by day;
My men grow ghastly wan and weak.'
The stout mate thought of home; a spray
Of salt wave washed his swarthy cheek.

'What shall I say, brave Admiral, say,
If we sight naught but seas at dawn?'
'Why, you shall say, at break of day,
"Sail on! sail on! sail on! and on!"'

"They sailed and sailed as winds might blow,
Until at last the blanched mate said:
'Why, now not even God would know
Should I and all my men fall dead.
These very winds forget their way,
For God from these dread seas is gone.
Now speak, brave Admiral, speak and say—'
He said, 'Sail on! sail on! and on!'

"They sailed. They sailed. Then spake the mate:
'This mad sea shows his teeth to-night.
He curls his lip, he lies in wait,
With lifted teeth as if to bite!
Brave Admiral, say but one good word:
What shall we do when hope is gone?'
The words leaped like a leaping sword:
'Sail on! sail on! sail on! sail on!'

"Then pale and worn he kept the deck,
And peered through darkness. Ah, that night
Of all dark nights! And then a speck,—
A light! A light! A light! A light!
It grew a star-lit flag unfurled!
It grew to be Time's burst of dawn;
He gained a world; he gave that world
Its grandest lesson, 'On, sail on!'"

9

DANIEL, THE HEBREW WHO PURPOSED *

Text: Daniel 1:8. *"But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself."*

I must frankly confess that I cannot sympathise with those unfortunate individuals who have struggled along through the years with names that they despise, for I have always liked my name. But, lest credit be given me that I do not deserve, I must make another confession and admit that my name was not popular with me at the beginning because of its Biblical associations.

I fell in love with the name Daniel because of a horse! At the foot of a hill called "Piety," because three ministers lived upon it, in the quiet Oregon town of my childhood, resided the "Senator," a kindly man of rugged worth, who was the father of my boyhood chum. The "Senator" owned the splendid animal that from the first day I saw him—and I was a very small lad then—caused me to glory in the name my parents had assigned to me, the first-born of their nine children.

What a horse he was! He was as black as night, with flowing curly mane and thick, glossy, though not over-long tail. His broad back curved easily over hips of huge proportions, and his limbs were as flawless as

* From a series of sermons prepared for *The Christian Endeavor World* by writers bearing Bible names.

the chiselled work of a master sculptor. His ample neck was proudly arched and fixed between mighty shoulders. His great head was never lowered for more than an instant, and his eyes were brimming lakes set kindly wide in a forehead smooth and deep. His ears were as delicately poised as a woman's; his spirit was the spirit of the high mountains where he was sired; and his name was "Dan."

Of course I have long since learned that in addition to having been arbitrarily fixed as an abbreviation of Daniel, the name Dan stands alone with a distinction quite its own. But Dan was the nickname fastened upon me after the passing of the diminutive Danny, which I despised, and this Dan of life's intimacies with the Daniel, now more intelligently valued than when the great horse gave me my first heartiness for it, have always been to me one and the same.

Of course when the heroic Hebrew of the Scriptures stood before me, and my soul began to apprehend the heights and depths of him, my whole mental attitude changed, and from a boisterous spirit of self-congratulation I became quiet and humble. Since the first change in my spiritual attitude toward the name Daniel, the change from loud to quiet, from self-satisfaction to self-searching, there has come no other change; for who could ever be worthy of such a name, however proud he may be to bear it?

Daniel, the divine judge of the Scriptures, given the name Belteshazzar by the prince of the eunuchs, was royal born and lived a royal life. He was led away as a captive into a land not of his fathers, but his soul was never in chains, for he never surrendered the spiritual authority of his life. It takes a real man to survive riches; poverty is more easily borne. Do

not pity the child reared in worthy surroundings, however humble; but children of the rich, pampered and unrestrained, with every whim granted and every appetite served, must be indeed of a sturdy mind and morally well-favoured to survive their temptations.

Daniel the Hebrew was rich in his physical inheritance, but he had a richer soul, and, when in his early youth temporal holdings were swept away and he was set down in the centre of a drunken court, he could not be spoiled. It is hard to withstand hatreds, but it is even more difficult to survive some friendships. This lad who held fast the faith, who could not be overwhelmed by either adversity or success, failed not, because "he purposed in his heart," and trusted in his God. Every life is determined by its purposes. Daniel purposed that he would not defile himself, and his character shines on the page of history as a white light. Because he had "purposed," he refused the king's meat and drink; because he had "purposed," he would not bow down to an idol, but *would* pray with windows open toward far-away, humbled Jerusalem; because he had "purposed," the lion's den could not turn him back; and, faithful to the truth, he translated dreams that announced ruin to his benefactors when silence must have seemed to be for himself the surer safety. Because Daniel "purposed," he made his body strong to live a hundred years, his mind alert to comprehend all learning, and his soul a fit place for God to conceive and bring forth mighty prophecies.

Daniel's purpose against defilement slew lustful appetite, destroyed selfish fear and unworthy ambition. It gave to his life a fixed goal and high objective. It drew him inexorably on so that he stopped nowhere; He tarried not with Nebuchadnezzar, with Belshazzar,

with Darius, with Cyrus, though he served them all faithfully and well. He was ever moving toward the fulness of the will of Jehovah, and he belonged to no earthly king; he was the property of God.

We will not deceive ourselves; standing alone Daniel was as helpless as any man of us, but he never stood alone. He practised perfectly the constant presence of his heavenly Father. His faith was magnificent in its simplicity and its promptness. There is no indication in the record that he hesitated a single instant about entering his room for his accustomed devotions after the establishing of the imperial decree against any other worship than that offered to the king. He did not move an eyelash to question the order that came as the result of his obedience to God rather than to men, and which cast him to the man-eating lions. Daniel knew "whom he had believed," and was "fully persuaded." He saw through because he lived through; because his spiritual dwelling place was established far beyond the black darkness of the evil times in which he had his physical existence. His gaze pierced the mysteries of a monarch's nightmares; his vision swept beyond the cloud-hung mountains of the old dispensation to the glorified slopes of the new, because the real house of his habitation was not made with hands, and was not set down in the heathen city of his captivity.

"Faith is the victory that overcomes the world," and to-day, as in the days of Daniel, this faith in the living and one God is translating dreams into realities. It is helping to keep men and women erect in the currents of passion and greed that swirl about them. It is refusing the command of an age that bows lower before gold than the Chaldeans bowed before the great

image. It is addressing the growing programme of social justice in the terms of Jesus. It is saving the heathen cities of civilisation from themselves, with social settlements, night-schools, and play-grounds, with child-betterment legislation and pure-food laws. It is this faith, this Daniel faith, that is evangelising the world; and this same faith will end war, and bring out of the chaos of it a new order of brotherhood the like of which no sun has ever shone upon. Do we hear the challenge of "our" faith? What boots it, then, where we live, how we feel, what we suffer, when we die? The same unfailing resource of power that Daniel drew upon is our supply to-day.

The courage of Daniel has always inspired me. In a great book at home, as a lad, I first saw a copy of the famous picture of the Hebrew prophet with hands bound in front of him, standing erect before the cowering lions. From that first hour when he dared argue with the director of the king's dining-room to the late afternoon when tradition says that his eyes beheld again his beloved Jerusalem and rested for the last time upon its rebuilt walls, Daniel was daily facing lions, and daily taming them. His physical courage was unsurpassed. He was a virile, manly man. His moral courage in its supreme moments, in all the recorded profane and sacred history of the world, no man has ever surpassed; perhaps one man, Joseph, equalled it.

The secret of Daniel's courage was hid in what he believed. A doubter is never a brave man, and courage depends very much upon the elements of a man's faith.

I have read somewhere of a pygmy African tribe whose medicine-men teach that there is nothing after

death; that the grave ends all. As the result of this teaching, the tribe gives all of its energies to the sustaining of physical life, to the satisfying of bestial passion. It has gone to the most remote places of interior jungles to escape conflicts with neighbouring tribes, and it has developed great cunning in ensnaring and crippling wild animals without danger to its hunters. Its women are cruel, and its men are cowards. On the other hand, the Japanese soldiers are the most invincible, because physical life to the Japanese is absolutely as nothing when compared with the honour and pleasure that are in the next world as immediate rewards for dying in battle for the emperor.

Daniel knew that he was not accountable to earthly kings, but to the King of all kings. He knew that his body was simply the house of his spirit; he was concerned to keep it clean; but, when wild beasts threatened it, he was not disturbed; for he knew that their fangs could not tear his immortal soul.

The perspective of Daniel's life was spiritual. Therefore, while he was eminently practical, and found favour with his captors because of what he knew and did, not once did he make the mistake of putting temporal and minor things first. Whenever the issue was drawn, he always decided without hesitation for the things that are eternal.

The statement, "It does not make any difference what a man believes so long as he lives right," is a great fallacy. No man does live right who grovels in his mind, who goes through life without any deep-set convictions. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." A coward is the child of doubt.

Daniel is the world's towering human example of the power of a fixed character. Living through three

heathen dynasties and under four kings, he was counsellor, confidant, and prime minister to them all, though they held him nominally a captive. But at no time in his long life did he sacrifice a single principle of his religion or swerve a hair's breadth from his spiritual purpose. He was implicitly trusted, and his personality caused him to be greatly loved. We find no record that he was ever doubted by God or man. A life that changes its fundamentals easily, that vacillates morally, that has no fixed course, could not have survived the disasters that overtook the vainglorious Nebuchadnezzar, the drunken Belshazzar, and the martial Darius. Daniel survived the rulers who successively honoured him, and was left undisturbed in his high estate while his temporal benefactors were utterly destroyed, because his reliability and great moral worth, coupled with his profound wisdom, made him an indispensable asset to a new king.

"The tumult and the shouting dies,
The captains and the kings depart"—

but some values never change. If there have been a few men without whom the world would have failed and in whom God was supremely honoured, Daniel was one of those men. In only one other personality of history have body, mind and spirit been so harmoniously synchronised into a symmetrical whole. Jesus alone "of all the sons of woman born" transcends in completeness of character, diversity of service, and supernatural authority, this purposeful Hebrew, Daniel, the "divine judge."

10

EXTREMITY AND OPPORTUNITY

Text: St. Matthew 26 : 45. *"The hour is at hand."*

Jesus had come to His hour. He was the central figure in the supreme paradox of time. He was helpless and He was all-sufficient; He was defeated and He was triumphant; He was on the road of humiliation, facing Calvary and His feet had begun to press the glory that led to His coronation; He was at the extremity of His humanity and about to accept the opportunity of His divinity. As a teacher He was the rejected; as king of the Jews He was the denied, but as Saviour of the world He was settling into His throne.

To-day man is in the hour of his extremity. It is the hour of suspicion. We feel suspicious of one another; we feel suspicious of ourselves. Nations put their trust in doubts again, and a world that had begun to vision the era of good feeling, for which it had paid dearly enough, hears once more the ancient hammers of discord clanging upon anvils of envy and greed.

It is the hour of broken vows. We promised ourselves, we promised one another, we promised God. All of our treasure had been brought forward. In limb and life and liberties, in blood and bonds, in body and in soul, we pledged ourselves to build the new world. Nothing that we could lay upon the sacrificial

altar was dear enough to be withheld, and so supremely epic was the need that small gifts came to have colossal value.

Disaster stalked our institutions; our lines were bending behind Mt. Kemmel; armies had been swallowed up; morale was a tottering wall, a crumbling tower; we were a sober, a repentant people; we made our covenant with God.

As nations we made it. We said, "Never again will we build a peace upon armaments and fleets; the recognition of the will to conquer, the strength to take and hold. We will perish in these bloody fields; we and all of ours will leap to greet the bitter death; but dying we will pay the price of the better part, and our children's children shall at last be free."

As churches we made it. The cloaks for selfishness and pride slipped from us as garments outgrown. We talked little of denominational programmes as such. We emphasised the larger things that as Christians we possess in common. We spoke as prophets of the brave days to come when all should toil together. We heeded voices that called us into conference, and the dreams of a united Protestantism began to take form.

As individuals we made it. We promised God; we, who in peaceful years had been able to deceive the world or brazenly to flaunt it, could not in those naked hours find a covering for smallness. We grew in spiritual stature, and became men and women for the times.

Now the enemy has withdrawn; and as, when Nebuchadnezzar turned away from the walls of Jerusalem to meet the Egyptians coming out of the south, Israel bound again the slave she had in the penitence of her adversity set free, so we even now are reaching

for the renounced weapons of our political partisanship, the discarded vices of our ecclesiastical divisions, the sins confessed, and the flesh-pots of our unregenerated hearts. Are we to lose the spiritual values established by the World War? God forbid that we should, and God pity us if we do; for, if we lose them, we have lost the war.

It is the hour of unrest. No man is satisfied. Labour strikes,—strikes in spite of contracts and against the orders of leaders; capital profiteers; to those who would appraise the times a wild array of charges and countercharges present themselves. A thousand social physicians shout their panaceas. Nothing is stable. In politics party lines are not only obliterated, but traditional policies are repudiated with all the unconcern of a thoughtless guest who ignores a dinner engagement. In the church we are violently mystical, or we spend passionless days in writing social-service creeds, or we wander listlessly over the paths between. Our patriotism is a coat of many colours; it has the red of anarchy to comfort the bomb-thrower, and from its sinister black we make a gag for freedom. Economically we are at two extremes; at the one we cry: "Now we will throw off the restraints imposed by the war; we will repudiate the agreements and compacts made between labour and capital when the terror of impending defeat forced us to the conference table. Again it shall be master and man." At the other extreme we shout, "The millennium has come to Russia. Let us enter in."

It is the hour of suffering. The world is a vast house of sickness. Mr. Hoover has said, that in a single year fifteen millions of people face starvation. John R. Mott has declared that more children, women,

and men have died as the direct results of the war, since the Armistice, than were slain during all the years of the bloody struggle.

What shall we do? What can we do? Let no man say that the evil in man now has the undisputed right of way. By the side of the pictures of promises broken and selfishness returning to its own, hang those of the purpose to be true, in the faces of men and women who have not ceased to pour themselves out in benefactions for mankind. In these is the hope of the race; with them lies our promise for the better to-morrow.

But what of this hour, the hour of suspicion, and broken vows, of unrest and suffering and need? It is the hour of man's extremity; the plans of man have broken down, for man himself has failed. He used the weapons that he knew, and they have buckled in his hand. It is the hour of man's extremity, but the hour of man's extremity is God's opportunity.

In September, 1915, a young Scotchman, a lieutenant, only a few days before he died, while gallantly leading his men in a charge, wrote to his mother, describing the fearful nature of the conflict, his growing appreciation of the issues involved, his great fear that the super-preparations of the enemy would compel an early conclusion of the war with disaster to the Allies. In one vivid paragraph he spoke of the inadequacy of everything his eyes had seen or his mind conjured, and concluded with the words: "Mother, God *must* be." To-day we are face to face with extremity's conclusion, which is extremity's compulsion. *"God must be."*

Whatever my definition of God may be, however I may describe and declare Him, if I am an intelligent

creature, a mind released to think, then I am bound to accept the fact of God, for God *must* be. No other hand than His has laid the paths of planets and filled space with universes; has made the sun and moon and stars, the earth and sky and sea and all that dwell therein. No other will than His has brought all things together. No other mind than His can shape the answers to these questions. No other love than His can heal these wounds, allay these suspicions, quench these thirsts, comfort these sorrows, forgive these sins, raise these dead. God *must* be.

Who is God? How shall we find God? There are a thousand answers to the question, "Who is God?" and no one of them, nor all of them together, answer. It is impossible for a man to comprehend God. Our approach to Him now is as awesome as it was in the days of the exodus, as impossible as when Moses heard His voice from the burning bush.

But what of the second question? Ah, that is different; for we have a mediator, one who stands between, and to the question, "How shall we find God?" the testimony of the ages, the sum of all Christian experience, replies, "We find God in Jesus Christ His Son, our Lord and Saviour." And does not the simple necessity of the occasion, freed of all dogma, stripped of every creedal statement, demand that this Jesus, through whom and in whom alone we find God, God the omniscient and omnipotent,—that this same Jesus must be omniscient and omnipotent too? that He must Himself be very God?

Now our path becomes clear, for Christ has blazed it through the wilderness of human doubt, lifted it high above the tides of human folly; and He Himself has walked upon it. Stumbling blindly about, over-

whelmed by insupportable odds, in our last extremity we find "the way." He was called the Galilean, and a Nazarene. He is Jesus. And when we find Jesus we find the answer to our question, the solution of our problem, the reason for our existence, comfort for our sorrow, healing for our sickness, forgiveness for our sin, and resurrection for our dead, for in finding Jesus we have found God.

Who is Jesus? Let Him answer: "I am the way, the truth, and the life." He is speaking for all the times and circumstances of man. Is this the hour of suspicion, of broken vows, of unrest, of suffering and needs? Is this the black hour of man's extremity? Then Jesus cries, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Cast your burdens upon me, and ye shall find rest for your souls."

This is the invitation, the invitation all-inclusive and all-satisfying. But it has an alternative. Above the scarred and suffering world, the empty ruins of its cities of pride and the heaps of its dead, He flings His words in crimson letters against a flaming sky, "Without me ye can do nothing." He alone can beat swords into ploughshares, equalise social inequalities, destroy racial hates, bring the world back from its lust of blood to that respect for law and order without which no freedom is secure. Christ alone can effectuate the parliament of nations; bring to pass the federation of the world, and perfect peace.

Where is Jesus? Let Him answer again: "I am with you alway," and "even unto the end of the world." He was speaking to His disciples, and thus He addresses His disciples to-day. And, as those first

faithful eleven were charged with responsibility for the message of Christ's kingdom in their time, so are we who are called Christians charged with the message in this fateful hour.

His physical feet no longer press the path that winds between Bethany and Jerusalem; we must be His feet. His physical eyes no longer rest upon the walls of Jerusalem; we must be His eyes. His physical voice no longer cries, "Come unto me"; we must be His voice. If Christ has a physical presence to-day, He has it through us. He stands or falls as His disciples, as Christians, as we, are true or false. And by the law of first things, by the call of the needs of dying men, by the claims of time and of eternity, our supreme business is the discovering of Jesus Christ to the groping lost world.

But the message of this hour will have very largely failed if it does not finally become even more personal. We have said that Christ is dependent upon His disciples, that He functions through men and women. How vastly important, then, is the task of those who would see men and women "Christ-like." Only as we are spiritually equipped can we perform our ministry as the representatives of the Lord and Saviour of mankind.

We are discussing the new world, the world that is to be, the new world that shall rise from the ashes of the old; but there can be no new world without new world-builders, and how shall a man become new? The answer to that question is in the voice of the ages, "Ye must be born again." We are "new creatures" in Christ Jesus, or we are yet dead in our trespasses and sins. Let there be no misunderstanding here; not by the gifts of our opulence, not by the deeds of our

vanity, not by self-inflicted penalties, not by high honours, nor by fine speech, do we fit ourselves to be the spiritual torch-bearers of the new era.

"What can wash away my sin?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.
What can make me whole again?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.
Oh, precious is the flow
That makes me white as snow;
No other fount I know,
Nothing but the blood of Jesus."

Approaching the present crisis in man and in man's world from any direction, considering him and his from all angles, we arrive at the same conclusion; as individuals, and as individuals brought together in society, we need first of all, we need above all and always, Jesus Christ—His forgiveness, His salvation, His praise, His power, His passion. We need Jesus, Jesus Himself; for Christ in us is our "hope of glory," and our grace to conquer. Without Him we are lost.

Then let the church give herself anew and fully to her supreme, her unique task. With the abandon of the disciples who burned with the flame kindled by the fiery tongues of the first Pentecost let her cry, "One thing I do." She will release her omnipotent energies only by proclaiming "Christ and Him crucified."

Raise the cross! Point to the blood! Preach the word; for "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will *draw,—will* draw—*I* will draw all men unto me."

I come to you with this message and with no other, not alone because the very atmosphere of the times is charged with it. I come to you with this message be-

cause it is the only message that I know in which are hope and life. It is the message that I heard first in the dear days when I buried my face in my mother's lap and lisped the prayers of my childhood; it is the message that my father preached in the church that his own hands nailed together, and now I tell it to my children. It is the message that spoke to me in college, and that no words of honest doubt, no superficial criticisms, were able to destroy. I have listened to it beneath the low-bending skies of the desert and in the solitary places of the mountains. I have heard it speak in the storms of the sea. I have been alone in the valley of the shadow with my dead, and it has comforted me. Once when the earth about me opened, and geysers of molten metal poured upward through shattered trees and heaving fields, while walls crumbled and the sky was filled with the missiles of man's hell, when the breath of death came out of the night and smothered me, I heard its voice; and pain and terror passed from me when he said, "Fear not; I am with thee." It is the message that to this hour has followed me all the days of my life; it is the only adequate message for a world sick unto death.

11

CONQUERORS OF CIRCUMSTANCE

Text: PHILIPPIANS 4:13. *"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."*

"Resolved: That circumstances make the man rather than that man makes his circumstances," was the subject of the first debate the writer participated in. He spoke in favour of the negative, and still finds himself on the same side of the proposition.

Scientists point to both animals and plants that have gradually become extinct as the result of climatic changes. They tell us of races of men that have disappeared from the face of the earth as the result of their inability to adapt themselves to new physical environments. Many of you have seen the sightless fish of the Mammoth Cave, creatures of environment. In one of the issues of *The National Geographic Magazine* appeared a very interesting story of the game territory of the Lake Superior region. It is quite remarkable how with the cutting away of the great trees and the springing up of smaller trees, underbrush, berry-bearing vines, and nut-growing bushes that could not flourish in the dense shade of the heavy timber, animal life has increased in that region until to-day more deer, moose, bear, and other wild animals are said to be there than there were a hundred years ago. Are they not, very largely, at least, creatures of circumstance?

Certainly we must consider the far-reaching influence of environment upon all life. The inhabitants of Africa are increasingly dark as they approach the equator, and as their habits of life leave them to a greater extent exposed to the direct rays of the sun. The trees of our Southwest, beginning with the sage-brush of the lower altitudes and up to six thousand feet, blend first into the dwarfed desert cedar, then into the more symmetrical and slightly taller piñon, and finally reach their full glory, at an altitude of from eight to nine thousand feet, in the white pines of the San Francisco and White Mountains. These trees are certainly the children of the climate and environment in which they live.

Recently a young man was electrocuted in New York, who began his career of evil-doing at the age of nine. When he was destroyed by the execution of the law, he had been twice a murderer, had committed other crimes too numerous to mention, and was less than twenty-one. He was conceived and born in sin, and reared in exceptionally vile surroundings. A leader of public thought, referring to the case, spoke of this youth "as the inevitable growth of a degenerate social soil."

How often great plans have failed because of circumstances quite beyond the control of those who made the plans! The sunken road at Waterloo may have overthrown the incomparable military genius of Napoleon and dictated European history for a hundred years.

Yes, we must concede the mighty influence of environment upon men and upon events. But circumstance, environment, the characteristics of the external world—these are not the main factors. Another scien-

tist, Dr. Thomson, says that "in higher plants as well as in higher animals, there seems to be greater freedom from the direct grip of environment." And Dr. Watkinson declares, "All history is the record of the revolt of the spirit against the rule of circumstance, and of the victories of the human will in life's gigantic struggle." In this fact, in the colossal and continuing warfare of the human soul, is the fascination of history.

Upon Alpine heights fighting the icy blasts and choking snow are some of earth's most refined and exquisite blossoms. In the deep sea are fish physically helpless against their voracious foes, but able to hide themselves against the colouring of the ocean's floor. Camels are prepared for their long journeys through burning desert sands by nature's cushioning on their feet and a natural water-reservoir.

And what of man? Have nature and nature's God been less prodigal with him, and is he less resourceful, less competent, than the flowers of the field and the beasts of the forest? What of man? Is he a creature of circumstance, held by chains of environment, subject entirely to external forces and conditions? Jesus loved the flowers that smiled up at Him as He walked; and He lingered long, I am sure, in grassy glades and by purling streams. But it was not over a field of daisies nor a rippling lake that He wept; it was over Jerusalem, the city. Not over its stones and walks and towers, but over its women and children and men. Humanity was His concern, the salvation of the people was His mission and His passion.

What, then, is the attitude of Jesus toward man? How does He look upon circumstance and environment? The New Testament shows little respect for

position, for prestige and power, as such. The weak, the poor, the humble, are invited to inherit the earth. The overcomers, the conquerors of circumstance, are exalted. Jesus, in selecting His disciples, went among the lowly, to fishermen instead of to financiers. The men with whom He left the interests of His kingdom, to whom He gave the stewardship of His cause, were men despised and rejected as was their Lord.

The lowly Nazarene, and not the haughty Pharisee; the Bethlehem manger Babe, and not a child from Herod's palace; the Galilean peasant, and not a nobleman of Capernaum; a simple speaker of the truth, unordained; a quiet-voiced companion and healer of men, not the high priest nor the prætor of Rome, was this wonder-working Christ who rose from shame to glory, from the cross to the crown, from the manger to the throne, from the stripes of the soldiers and the spittle of the rabble to the hosannas of angels and the right hand of God.

And every new crusade, every unacclaimed reform that has come at last to popular approval, has found its first supporters and leaders, not among earth's recognised great men and women, but in the study of a Calvin, or in the shop of a Socrates, or where some village Hampden plies his trade. I do not remember now a single character who stands in history like a sun among falling stars, who was not a conqueror of circumstance, who did not rise in spite of surroundings, who was not the master of his environment.

Paul, whose journeys for the time in which he lived and the means of transportation at his disposal, were the most adventurous of history as well as the most far-reaching missionary tours of his age; Paul, whose Christian ministry stands for all time as second only

to that of Jesus, held the word of the law and broke the bread of life with fingers already callous from the needle and cord of a tentmaker. Every mile he travelled was a thrust of torture to his pain-racked body, and he was the mightiest orator of the early church in spite of his insignificant presence.

The hand that wrote some of Walter Scott's rarest passages was the hand of a man suffering unutterable physical torture.

Milton, who looked into the future far enough to see, and clearly enough to portray, paradise, was blind.

George Washington, in spite of wealth and family distinction, espoused the cause of a humble people, cast his lot with a revolution whose failure seemed inevitable and whose failure meant the confiscation of property and the loss of life. Not all conquerors of circumstance are poor, nor are all unknown. Other things being equal, undoubtedly it is harder for a man of position or a woman of standing to follow principle in the espousing of an unpopular cause, than it is for a person who has nothing in the way of temporal value to lose.

In 1904 J. Frank Hanly was elected governor of Indiana by the largest majority ever received for the gubernatorial office in that State. He was the leader of his party, and the popular idol of his commonwealth. No office within the gift of the people seemed beyond his reach. During the first year of his term his attention was drawn to the saloon's violations of the law; and then, as he attempted to enforce the statutes in cities where municipal authorities were delinquent, he became convinced of the inherent evils of the liquor traffic itself.

He came eventually to believe in absolute prohibi-

tion. His friends in dismay sought to silence his public utterances. They made a determined effort to keep his new-found convictions out of his official life. Prohibition was most unpopular then, even in the Middle West. Among politicians it was tabooed, and no man with serious ambitions made the "mistake" of allowing the question to creep into his platform. Governor Hanly was told, and without the mincing of words, that if he had any idea of remaining in public life in Indiana, if he hoped ever to realise for himself the yet higher ambitions of his friends, he must silence his conscience with regard to prohibition.

Some of us, who knew and loved Governor Hanly and who were greatly honoured by having his affection and confidence, know how bitter, how heart-breaking, the struggle became, but Governor Hanly did not falter. He remained absolutely loyal to his convictions, and with flashing eye and burning eloquence proclaimed them, first throughout Indiana, and then through the length and breadth of the continent. He lost the United States senatorship, and perhaps the chance to be President of the United States, for some of us believe that no man since Lincoln has been inherently greater; but he won a glorious immortality. When in a terrible accident his life was suddenly cut off, he had seen the cause for which he had made supreme sacrifices, and to which he had brought contributions perhaps greater than those of any other one man, triumphant at the polls and a fact in government.

But how utterly impossible it is to call the long roll! The Lincolns and Grants who came from log cabins to the White House; the Napoleons of the land, the Nelsons of the sea, who rose from obscurity to hold the centre of the world's stage of war; the poets who like

Burns walked in poverty while they sang songs for the ages; the musicians who have drawn from souls but lightly held in bodies gaunt from hunger the symphonies that have ravished the ears of mankind; the Frances Willards and the Harriet Beecher Stowes, the Clara Bartons and the Florence Nightingales, the mother of the Gracchi and the mothers of men whose arms were empty from the cradle that they might hold the crying children of the world—these, all of these, and unnumbered others who with these bore the cross, endured the shame, survived the anguish, and took their very captivity captive, these were conquerors, conquerors of circumstance.

But the rest of us say, "Ah, yes, so they were, but what of us?" These were remarkable individuals, extraordinary people. To them surroundings were never more than the incidental. Favourable circumstances or unfavourable, kindly environment or unfriendly, they became great because they were great, because they had greatness within themselves.

But does not the same principle apply to us all? or may it not apply to us all? I remember a one-armed lad who played on the sand lots that were the only athletic field of our neighbourhood. He set himself with unyielding determination to be a football-player, and became one of the greatest linemen of his college generation. I remember a chubby fellow with the most awkward stride and gait in the squad, who became the fastest middle-distance runner of his State. At Fortress Alexandria in Coblenz, just after the armies of occupation reached the Rhine, I met a Christian Endeavour boy from San Diego who was an observer with the 91st Air-Squadron, and who was wearing the D. S. C. The examiners turned him back three times

because of defective eyesight. He reached the front under a mistake in orders, received his chance because of a series of disasters that left a division suddenly without support in the air; and then because he had never given up the idea that somehow, sometime, he would be needed, and had prepared himself accordingly, he rendered an imperative and brilliant service that pinned a cross upon his breast and kept him flying until the armistice was signed.

A few weeks ago I met a young man in Arizona, a "lunger," who came out of the war with tuberculosis. For twelve months he gasped for breath in a sanitarium bed in Phœnix; and then, scarcely able to be up, he began to go about. Presently he was found in a small Santa Fé railroad town, serving a little Methodist church as "supply." When I became acquainted with him, he was preaching to a steadily increasing congregation, directing a far from ordinary choir, and shepherding a community that had for years been hurrying along, not directly or deliberately rejecting, but sadly forgetting, God. He blessed me greatly as we sat together. His quietly heroic spirit moved my soul; and, when I left him, I was a richer man.

Recently in an Ohio city there died the mother of one of my associates in the United Society of Christian Endeavour. A fatal malady had for months slowly worn away her strength; but sweetly and cheerfully, with as fine a heroism as ever went to death, she entered the shadows. And she died as she had lived. When she was a young mother with six children, the eldest fifteen, her husband was called by death, and she was left almost penniless. The record of her life from that day forth is a chronicle of sacrifices. She baked, and sold her loaves. A former school-teacher

herself, she tutored her children, and prepared them for special recital work. As time and strength allowed, the little family delighted audiences with their music and their speaking. The boys sold papers and handy articles, for the home. As they grew older, they worked after hours and on Saturdays in the local stores. The family was kept together. The baby girl died, but the two sisters and three brothers remaining grew into beautiful young womanhood and strong young manhood, by the side of the wonderful woman who never for a moment lost courage or surrendered her faith.

While I lay convalescing from an accident, I received a letter from this mother of my friend. It was written with her left hand; her right had already become helpless; and it was the jolliest, happiest letter that came to me in those days. It was beautifully composed, as airy as the song of a bird at the dawn.

No woman ever worked harder; no woman ever suffered more intensely than she; no woman ever faced sterner handicaps; no woman ever kept her heart bright under greater difficulties. When she closed her eyes and folded her worn-out hands in rest, she must have been quite satisfied. Two daughters, one the wife of a minister, the other the wife of a successful business man with whom she spent her last days on earth, were by her side. One son, an officer in the World's Christian Endeavour Union, was hurrying to her; another in South Africa, and the third a missionary on the Nile, were far away, yet clasped in the love that made them clean and strong. She was a conqueror of circumstance.

Is there an explanation that will help us? What is the secret of this courage? Where is the hidden

spring of this life? You will find it in the fountain that was opened long ago for the healing of the nations. Jesus is speaking to a woman by an ancient well; and, if you will listen, you will discover that He has a message for you. "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." That glad word, *whosoever.*"

Not captains, and statesmen, and all the earth's brilliant and wise alone, but *whosoever, whosoever will,* may find this hidden spring, may have this expanding, overcoming, conquering spirit within. I have seen people far removed from the services of any church, deprived of the companionship of Christians, shut in by sickness, buried in the wilds of an Indian reservation, or surrounded by the rough associations of a mining-camp, enjoying the comradeship of this great friend, and strengthened by Him to the tasks of their humdrum, lonesome lives. Because they had it in them!

Just recently a letter reached me from a young missionary in China who during the past year has passed through many dangers. Referring to an hour of great terror he writes: "It is wonderful to feel God's power over the events that without Him would end in our hurt. When attacked by bandits on the Canal, and later when between bandits and soldiers during a pitched battle that effected our escape, I felt God's protection and peace."

What is your trouble? What are the discouragements of your environment? What problems and difficulties weigh you down? ruin your health? bow your

soul? You need not tell me. One thing I know. You may be a conqueror of circumstance. You say that you have tried, and tried again, and failed? Well, better men than we are, and weaker men than we are, and men with deeper griefs and difficulties, have tried and tried again and failed, and then tried again and succeeded.

You—yes, *you*—may be a conqueror of circumstance. Hear a conqueror testify; one who overcame the world; hear the shout of his victory, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

12

FROM THE MANGER TO THE THRONE *

Text: St. Luke 1:32. *"He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High."*

"And about this time in Bethlehem of Judea was born Jesus who truly did many wonder-things." In these words Josephus records the fact of the birth of Him whom having not seen we love, whose name is above every name, the Saviour of mankind, the Christ of God.

The story of the advent of the Messiah, so long looked for, so ardently longed for, is the golden story of the ages. Whatever men may say of Him who was "the condensation of divinity and the exaltation of humanity," however they may regard His sacrificial atonement, to-day they come, as did the wise men 1900 years ago, and kneel before the manger, and its Babe. Twenty years since, I heard a distinguished rabbi, now of New York City, say, "Jesus! Jesus!—whom I love and honour; whom you worship and serve."

This is the birthday of a King. No! this is the birthday of *the* King, King of kings; Lord of lords.

How did He come? He came in poverty. His birth-chamber was not even a comfortable stall. The animals of a well-appointed farm are better housed than

* A Christmas sermon.

was Mary's Son on His natal morn. For those who have seen the stables of the East, the camel-yards and sheep-folds, who remember the noisome odours from the refuse heaps, there are no delusions in the reverent pictures of the masters. The only-begotten son of the Father, the Father who holdeth the wealth of the worlds in His hands, was muffled in the swaddling clothes of poverty by the hands of a virgin who in her travail hour was turned from the door of a village inn.

He was born without a complete family record. If after twenty centuries there are still those who decry His divine parenthood, what of the day in which His eyelids fluttered open for the first time? The gospels tell us little,—they are suggestively silent. But Bethlehem and Nazareth were not celestial villages. The clackers clacked and their children pointed fingers of scorn. The years that pass add lustre to the name of Joseph. Had ever woman truer mate? He was a man! But the maiden who replied to the angel of annunciation, "Behold the handmaiden of the Lord. Be it unto me according to thy word," could not be spared the sidelong glances and suggestive smiles, nor could the Babe upon her breast. To the multitude Jesus was a child of shame. These were the sinister twins that stood about the manger crib—poverty and shame. Through childhood they companioned Him; in all His life they never wandered far from His side; for an hour they were lost among the palms, their voices drowned by loud hosannas, but quickly they returned to weave His shroud. They left Him at the Cross.

The times were evil when Jesus came. The sword arm of Rome hung over the world, and the voice of

authority was the voice of the soldier. Israel was both conquered and decadent; her government was directed by strangers who gave a sop to her princes by clothing them with an outward appearance of power; their religion was a dead formalism cut across by the creeds and practices of warring sects; their temple was a market-house for gamblers and profiteers, with priests the chief offenders; there were no prophets; the faithful were discouraged and leaderless. When Jesus came Jerusalem was a tomb of departed glory.

But from the manger Jesus journeyed to His throne; up from the poverty of Bethlehem and through the shame of Nazareth, He came to rule the world. His quiet voice was mightier than the battle shout of Rome, and those who saw Him smile forgot that they were slaves.

He was born a King. The wise men from the East who came with gifts to kneel before His humble bed, the shepherds who heard the angels sing and ran to greet Him in the silent night, found not the son of Joseph but the Son of God. Did we say from the manger to the throne? Ah, the manger *was* a throne. A steep, long road he travelled to His crown, but always He was king,—king because He was, and king because He was kingly. In others we discover flaws and love them none the less,—in Him we find no fault at all. He was the perfect man who was and is very God.

Jesus was the supreme demonstration of character. He was a monarch not because of earthly circumstance, rather in spite of it, and in the final analysis not because of blood. He had within Himself the power to be, or not to be; He could have overthrown the plan

of His Heavenly Father and by silence as well as by refusal; but in appalling physical and mental hardships, in evil report and through misunderstandings that broke His heart,—misunderstandings that brought home to Him the stern realisation that He would be rejected of men because they would be unwilling to accept Him for what He was, and for what He had to offer,—He was true to Himself and to His mission; He kept the faith. The truth is for us all.

He may have toiled with grimy hands
And shoulders bowed with care,
Yet been a King!
He may have laboured through long years
Of battling want and grim despair,
Yet been a King!
He may have died in grief alone,
Unwept, unhonoured and unknown,
Yet been a King!

Men did not think that they had rejected the kingdom and their Messiah, when they finally denied Jesus, but they would have nothing to do with the kind of kingdom they came at last to see He had for them. They had thought too long in terms of gilded vessels and burnished trappings. They had read history at the expense of prophecy. They knew Saul and David better than they knew Isaiah. They were wiser in politics and trade than they were in religion. Their eyes were blinded so that when their great day dawned they did not recognise it.

Ah, what a tragedy! To suffer as Israel suffered and then to refuse the healing; to wait as Israel waited and then to lose the glory. And on every Christmas

Day we face the danger that proved too great a menace for the Jew. We, too, wait on temporal power and put our trust in royal purple. We, too, think in terms of gains, and ask the price of gifts. We, too, seek the higher seats and scheme for place. Again the rabble cries, Crucify! Crucify!

But He is King. Let no note of pessimism dominate this day. And His kingdom of the spirit has wider sway than ever before. When we think of the principles He preached nearly two thousand years ago,—think of them in the abstract and apart from their historical associations, we feel like joining ourselves to the discouraged prophet, but when we study society now as related to society then, we find reason to take heart. More and more Jesus has captured the imaginations of men; more and more as their own efforts have failed they have turned to Him. More and more they have inclined to accept His idealism, as the standard for living; more and more they have come to agree that He is for time, as well as for eternity,—the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

He is King of kings, and His Kingdom is at hand. Slowly, but steadily and irresistibly, that which the disciples preached, even though they did not fully understand it, is coming into existence. The destruction of piracy and slavery; the overthrow of the private feud; the outlawing of the liquor traffic and the traffic in girls; the emancipation of women; the conservation of childhood; the serious discussion of disarmament; the new diplomacy in International Relations; and the higher conception of the responsibility of the strong for the weak,—are steps of progress in the way that Jesus opened long ago for the healing of the nations.

THUS HIS KINGDOM COMES

Armies marching to and fro;
Clank of steel and crash of blow;
Brother laying brother low,—
This the setting long ago,
When the Prince of Peace was born.

Armies marching to and fro;
Clank of steel and crash of blow,
Brother laying brother low,—
Setting now as long ago,
For the Holy Christmas Morn.

Peasantry with naked feet,
Children starving in the street,
Plenty in the manor seat,
Lust and squalor,—these to greet,
When the manger held a King.

Peasantry with naked feet,
Children starving in the street,
Plenty in the manor seat,
Lust and squalor,—still to greet,
As the Christ Child carols ring.

But His blood cried from the ground,
From Golgotha's reeking mound,—
For the world's great open wound,
Thus the triumph way was found
For the nations long ago.

And the road is still the same;
By the cross and by the flame,
Truth prevails o'er wrong and shame,
WHO WILL FOLLOW IN HIS TRAIN?
Thus His Kingdom comes below.

Jesus:—this King who journeyed from the manger to the throne, is King of kings because He is monarch of the soul. He commands the spirit. Here His empire has its sway. He healed the sick; He raised the dead, and now His boundary lines are marked by hospitals and held by surgeons, but His Kingdom is not of this world. His Kingdom is in this world and over it, and He shall reign "where'er the sun does his successive journeys run," because He rules the heart.

To-day with far-visioning hopes we plan disarmament where yesterday we poisoned men with gas and slew the sons of men until their blood ran down the earth, and every hope that sees a star is set to the music that was heard first by shepherds on Judea's hills when angels sang, "Peace on earth, goodwill to men." War can change national boundaries and hate can level cities and destroy nations, but only God can build a new earth, for God alone can make new creatures out of men.

Perhaps this is the message that we need to-day as we need no other. Are we trusting too much in ourselves, in our statesmanship, in our culture, in our traditions, in our wisdom, in our temporal advantages and natural resources? Let us not forget that everything this generation has, as compared with its problems and dangers, every other generation has had. Athens was not less cultured than Paris; Rome was as mighty as Washington!

His Kingdom is spiritual and it is love,—the love that casteth out fear; the love that gathers little children to its breast and blesses them; the love that seeketh not her own; the love that beareth all things; the love that is greater than faith, mightier than hope

and that never faileth. This love is to-day the most potent power, the most practical thing in the world. For a state it is a greater protection than a grand fleet; in business it is infinitely more effective than espionage and undercover methods; interracially it has the only prophecy of peace. Love thy neighbour as thyself, is the Magna Charta of human brotherhood, and only as its principle is applied will men be secure in person and purse, will industry be humanised, and swords beaten into ploughshares.

But what think you of Christ? That is the question. And what does Christmas mean to you? There is a wonderful story told of a woman taken in adultery who was brought to Jesus. Reading the minds of her accusers, and knowing their hypocrisy, he said, "Let him that is without fault cast the first stone," and while one by one until all had gone they stole silently away, He wrote in the sand. Then to the unfortunate sister of all who have sinned, as she sinned, He spoke the great emancipation, "Go and sin no more." Not stones, but salvation is His remedy for fallen women, and for fallen men. Every home for unfortunates, every rescue mission, is an outpost of His Kingdom, and that which prisons and guillotines have failed to do, His grace is all-sufficient for. He touches the hidden springs of life. He brings forward the best; He is the captain of the soul and when He speaks and when I hear and follow Him, though dead in trespasses and sins, I pass from death to life.

It is here that the Christian religion, when compared with all other faiths, is unique and stands supreme. "What can wash away my sin?" has been the agonising cry of man since Adam fell. "What can make me whole again?" And the only answer that

has ever satisfied, is the answer that comes from Calvary, "Nothing but the blood of Jesus." There are some things that I can do to right the wrongs that I have done, but I cannot forgive myself, nor can I buy forgiveness for you do not have it; nor can I earn it,—it is the gift of God.

To-day we acclaim the world's greatest conqueror and He is not among the mighty captains who overthrew strong cities and compassed far seas to enslave strange peoples. Nor is He numbered with the wise who made great discoveries, who bridged vast spaces and brought the lightnings down to drive the wheels of trade. Greater things than these fall from His hand like snowflakes from a winter cloud, for when He promised Paradise to a thief who hung beside Him on a cross, and when He cleansed the woman of her shame, He did the greater things than these.

This is the day of Gifts,—the day of joy and singing, the children's day.

Glad I am for dear old Christmas,
Time of singing, time of joy,
Glad I am that once I lived it,
Just a tousle-headed boy.

Glad I am to know the crossing
In the sullen tide between
Hither banks that fade and tarnish
And the fields of living green.

For the miles that are so many
'Twixt me here and those I love,
Will be nothing when we gather
In the Father's house above.

And I think, ah, yes, 'tis knowledge,
I shall know as I am known,
When I celebrate first Christmas
With the family 'round the Throne.

This is the day of Gifts. You gave a doll to-day and heard your daughter's cry of pure delight. Your son, your wife, your friend, the ones that you love best, took from your hands the treasures that however poor they may have been were rich as ropes of pearls because you found them in your heart.

This is the day of Gifts, and at its close we bring to you the greatest gift of all, the gift of peace,—the peace that passeth understanding,—the peace of sins forgiven,—the gift of love. I bring to you this greatest gift of all,—it is not mine, it is the Gift of God, for God is love, and "He so loved the world that He gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

13

WE FINISH TO BEGIN *

Text: St. John 19:30. *"It is finished."*

"We finish to begin." Always we stand in an exit and at an entrance. Forever one year is behind us; another is before us.

"We finish to begin," but what does it mean? The blotters in the various police courts of the great cities show the record of crimes committed by outlaws who prey upon their fellows; the morning press records deeds of violence perpetrated upon society by evil-doers who finish one year of sin but to begin another. And, as the thug upon his way to robbery and murder heard the bells chime the New Year, his actions spoke louder than words, "I finish to begin."

The labouring man who skimps his work, who gives less than an honest day for his wage, who as a leader fastens upon his fellows ridiculous rules and regulations, with a system of inexcusable fines that place a premium upon inefficiency if not sabotage, who talks about society as owing him something when he is in reality earning little or nothing, who in thinking and acting for himself forgets or despises the general public, which has been long-suffering, but which has suffered too long already, finishes only to begin. Will this slacker worker continue to misrepresent the great

* A New Year's sermon.

body of his fellows, prejudicing their honest cause, robbing them of the sympathy they need and should have? Will he continue to play into the hands of those he seeks to destroy, not only rendering hopeless his own ill-advised programme, but thwarting the purposes of the wise and patriotic leaders who seek to safeguard the rights of the toiler and to win for him a larger place in the industrial and social order? He has finished and he will begin, but has he finished *to begin?*

The employer who turned grimly from the war, saying, "Now that we have won, we must quickly get back to business as usual"; the employer who failed to realise that things would never again be as they had been, who was surprised and indignant because foreign-born peoples who had been called "Americans All!" when disaster was threatening the Allies, resented in bitterness being treated like "hunkies and Polacks and dagoes" after the armistice was signed, who refused conferences, who denied collective bargaining, who shut the door in the face of chosen representatives of his workers, who employed under-cover men—spies, who found an ever-ready weapon in the lie, and who did not stop at murder,—this employer has finished, too.

What is in his mind as he faces the future? Has he learned anything from the International Harvester Company's demonstration of the participation of labour in the control of industry?—a demonstration that recently and for the first time in history revealed workers by their own votes reducing their own pay, when the business was found unable to maintain the higher wage? Has he heard of the shop committee in such institutions as the Colorado Fuel and Iron Com-

pany of the Rockefellers? Does he know anything about the results that have come to great department stores through profit-sharing with employés? Has he an open mind and a new heart? Has the worker, has the employer, an open mind and a new heart? They have finished, and they will begin; but have they finished to begin?

There are business men who during the financial stress and strain of the immediate past drifted out of the lives of their sons and daughters. Foolish indeed should I be carelessly to censure them. They may have faced the spectre of financial disaster and gone to death-grips with bankruptcy. Not all of them by any means have made a deliberate choice between honour and business. Nor have all of them been carried away by the passion for success as measured by gold. But what they have lost, not all the gold of Midas could restore; and what their children are losing, no accountant will ever be able to compute.

One afternoon while fishing in a small tributary of the Siletz River in the Pacific Northwest, I came upon a jam of driftwood that partially dammed the mouth of a yet smaller creek that rushed down a cañon of the coast mountains. Among the logs and branches I found several fine specimens of fresh beaver cuts, and, hoping to discover a beaver colony not far away, I unjointed my rod, cached my pack, and followed up the ravine. The beavers were more distant than I expected; indeed, I never reached them, but I did find something vastly more interesting. Where the cañon widened into a tiny valley, I came upon a cabin. The great firs had been cut away, and the log house with its sheds and barn was set in the middle of a two-acre clearing.

Now there were many cabins in those mountains, the cabins of timber-cruisers and of men and women who were proving up on timber claims. But the fruit-trees and garden and tiny flower-yard, and the morning-glories climbing over a trellis, placed this "wee hoose" in a class by itself. A man was hoeing corn in the field, and a bareheaded little girl was following behind him. We greeted each other and talked for an hour. We had not spoken two words, indeed, he had not passed beyond the smile of welcome, until I knew him for what he was,—an educated and a cultured gentleman. An older girl, nine, perhaps, joined us while we talked. Mentally I commented upon the absence of the mother.

We discussed politics—it was August, 1900, the year of McKinley's re-election. I found him thoroughly acquainted with the issues of the campaign. He knew the beavers, too, and took me into one of the most attractive living rooms I have ever seen, to look at the skins he had gathered, skins of muskrats and lynx as well as of beaver. There was a "baby organ" in one corner of the room; music and books,—good books,—magazines, and pictures were everywhere. One of the pictures, I remember, was Hoffmann's "Boy Christ"; another was "The Landing of the Pilgrims"; and over the mantle hung an exquisite painting of a young and beautiful woman. We talked for an hour, and then I hurried away. He had not spoken of himself, and of course I had not asked any personal questions; but later I learned his story.

He was a successful young business man, the son and heir of a wealthy manufacturer, happily married, and with two little daughters, when his wife suddenly died. After struggling along for a year he startled and

amazed his Eastern associates by quietly announcing that he had purchased an unimproved quarter-section of timber-land in the Northwest, and that he was withdrawing from all business responsibilities to move into the wilds to spend five years with his daughters. He was not bitter. He simply decided that to remain where he was meant inevitably the loss of the greatest joy of his fatherhood. He believed that for five years he could give to his little girls every vital thing that they needed, that at the end of that time they would be ready to return, go on with their studies, and enter the normal life of his people.

Financially he was in a position to do as he wished. Certain ambitions were of course sacrificed; but deliberately he made the choice, and to-day he does not regret it. He lived in the remote mountains a year longer than he had originally planned to stay. Now and then relatives of the children visited them, and two or three times every year the little girls went out with their father for supplies; that was all. He was their tutor and their guide, their housekeeper, their playmate, their father, and, with the help of the picture, their mother. No women in all this world have richer, sweeter memories of their childhood than the two little girls I saw for the first and last time more than twenty years ago in the Oregon mountains.

Fathers and mothers, we have finished with the old year; what of the new? We cannot go to the wilds with our children, but we can come out of the wilderness of society and business in which they have lost us. We finish to-night. Oh, let us begin.

Internationally the old year has been a year of old wounds reopened and bled afresh. Would to God the nations with a mighty and united voice might say,

"We finish; we finish, and we finish to begin!" We finish a year of suspicion and war, a year of planning and building and wasting against future wars, a year of impoverishment and famine. We finish, and we finish to begin; to begin a new year; a year of peace; a year of disarmament; a year in which battle-fleets shall be dismantled, fortifications scrapped, and armies disbanded; a year in which the vast energies of civilisation shall be mobilised against hunger, disease, and poverty; a year of war, but a year of war for man and not against him; and God pity the nation or the nations that block the road of hope up which civilisation struggles in a bloody sweat.

One Sunday evening in the spring of 1921 a young man came into a great New York church, drenched to the skin, sadly under the influence of liquor, a wreck in body and in mind. The story is the old one, in which an invalid mother, a broken-hearted father, a wife and babies and a ruined career are mixed with the tears of grief and churned by the ladle of sin. The church did the best that it could for him, but I have been thinking of him to-day, and wondering what he is saying to-night. I have been thinking about him because there are so many of him in every city. What is he saying? God help him to say, "I finish; I finish, and, trusting in Christ for strength, I finish to begin, finish to begin a new life."

Ten years ago I watched the old year out in the Pacific Garden Mission, Chicago, the mission that captured "Mel" Trotter and Harry Monroe and Billy Sunday and thousands of others for God. It was homecoming night; the room was crowded; there were men and women present from all sections of the country. As is always the case in such a service, the testimonies

of the converts were the most gripping portion of the programme. One of the speakers, a man in middle life, said that years before on a New Year's night he had staggered down the aisle of that old hall and fallen in a half-stupor across its altar-rail; that somehow God had saved him there, given him a new heart, a new life, and that in the early hours of a New Year's morning he had walked through the doors of that mission a new man in Christ Jesus. He told how he had returned to his wife, and how together they had rebuilt their broken home. He concluded by saying, "To-night, by the grace of God, I am a respected citizen of my city, president of a bank, and father of a Christian family." He had finished one year, and he had finished it to begin another.

Few of us find anything in our experience that brings us to common ground with this man; you were never on the street, sodden in a vice, the victim of an evil appetite; or perhaps you were. But there is no one who does not have temptations and problems and weaknesses, who does not look back upon an old year that has in it something that, when we are honest with ourselves, we wish had never been. Thank God, you have finished the old year, and thank God that you may finish to begin a new year.

Ah, sad it would be if we but finished, if there were no new year to begin! What you have written you have written, but you have not written all. The page is full, but the book is not completed; turn the page! turn the page to-night!

Has the year been disastrous to your plans, or has it brushed the hand of death across your brow? Has it witnessed the wrecking of cherished ambitions or the loss of trusted friends? Has it overwhelmed you

with physical pain and mental anguish? Well, the year is finished, and all of these are tragedies of the past. Begin again!

Or has the old year brought joy and peace to your door? Has it carried for you "apples of gold in pictures of silver"? Ah, then you are ready with singing lips and shouting soul to begin a new.

The old is gone, gone beyond recall, gone forever. But for the new the tide has just begun to turn. We begin!

Then what of this beginning? How shall we begin? Merchants are making inventories and taking account of stock, and we are planning in a more or less definite way our programme of work and of pleasure for another year. But, as we look back, how futile it all appears! We do our best; we honour our clearest judgments, and we should; but how utterly impossible it is to anticipate the happenings of a year! In three hundred and sixty-five days

> "The best laid schemes o' mice and men
> Gang aft agley."

There is absolutely nothing that we can do to assure ourselves health, success, and happiness. The new year is for all of us a land of mystery with many a river of doubt and many an unmarked crossing. We may win and we may lose. We may greet our ships as heavy-laden they return from distant seas, or we may wait for them in vain. We may live, and we may not. We may hold the home lines firmly, or death may break through our last defences and leave a smouldering ruin in our heart. We do not make the weather, and we are seldom good prophets. There will be

winter and there will be summer, but who shall tell us truly, "If winter comes, can spring be far behind?"

We are at the beginning; but the end, and even the next step, is hidden from us. The pathway we travel unfolds as a road through the deep forests and sunny open places of an ever-changing country. We are beginning a journey to-night, a journey that calls for a guide; for with what I know of the old year, I do not care to enter the new alone. There are those by my side who went with me to the gates of death and back again, but neither they nor I would care to face the future without God. To-night it is for me, and I hope for you, the beginning, and "in the beginning, God." He knows this way. He is master of its mysteries; to Him it has no terrors; and I am safe when by His side.

We finish to begin. I am glad. We may not know, but we do hope, hope with the hope that springs eternal in the human breast, hope with the hope that sends men and women forth with radiant faith to dare the great adventure. We are at the beginning, and we are glad, glad, to have lived, glad to be alive.

14

THE LIGHT THAT HAS NEVER FAILED

Text: St. John 8:12. *"I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life."*

In the Old Testament there is a very wonderful story of a lamp with an unfailing light in it, a perfect picture of the Bible's relation to Jesus Christ. The "Book of books" contains Him, and He is the light of the world. Through the Bible's brightly burnished lenses He shines. Its divinely inspired pages reveal Him. In it we see Jesus, and following its admonitions we follow the Christ.

Some men profess to find a contradiction between the emphatic statement of the New Testament, "I am the light of the world," and the equally emphatic declaration, "Ye are the light of the world." There is no contradiction. We are the light of the world only because He is the light of the world, and because He, being in us, shines out through us.

How perfectly this marvellous relationship between the human and the divine was portrayed when at the healing of a blind man the Great Physician said, "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." I can almost hear Him continue: "And after I return to the Father I must particularly rely upon you. Then ye are the light of the world."

It is no mean thing to be a Christian. To be a Christian is a terrible responsibility. A failing beacon on Cape Cod means a clipper in the shoals. A Christian going astray often has led another life to shipwreck. But do you hesitate? Do you refuse to become a Christian because of the responsibility? It is useless for you to do so, for you escape nothing; the responsibility remains, but by your own choice you are a lamp unfilled and unburning. To hopeless people about you, struggling in darkness, you deliberately deny the gleam that might save them from paths of pain, from pitfalls of disaster.

The only complete failure is the failure of the man who refuses to try. And how glorious a thing it is to try, to do your level best, to face temptation and responsibility! How glorious a thing it is to dare all, trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for strength!

Ah! there is the difference! I cannot fail if I am true; for He is the light, I am the light-keeper. Mine to keep the lenses burnished and the vessel filled; His, to shine. When I refuse, I refuse the light, and I deny the light to those who would see it if I but released it. From the standpoint of responsibility it is a fearful thing to be a Christian, but it is an infinitely more terrible thing to refuse to be one.

Did I say that it is a fearful thing to be a Christian? Yes, because immortal souls rest upon us their destiny to a degree beyond our comprehending. But it is equally true that it is the only thing that casteth out fear; the burden of responsibility becomes a burden of joy, and fear is lost in faith.

The only man who has a right to confidence is the man who walks with Christ, for he and he only walks in the light. This is the light "that lighteth every

man." Put your trust in no other. Be satisfied with no substitute, and allow no false or superficial counsel to start you in the wrong direction. A few years ago a student in the senior class of a great State university came into my office, and discussed with me his after-college career. He had two splendid offers; they appeared to be equally attractive. He was disturbed and uncertain; several times in the course of the conversation he said, "Oh, it would be easy enough if I had only one of them."

Before he left I slipped the bolt in the door of the inner office, and, kneeling by the table, we prayed together for light, more light. I saw him again after Commencement and there was no uncertainty in the smile with which he said, "I've settled it, and it's all right." "How did you do it?" I questioned. There was the suggestion of surprise in his tone as he answered, "I prayed through."

I do not know what darkness of doubt or uncertainty or grief or disappointment may surround you; but I do know that Jesus is the light, that He will make plain the way for you; that, if you will but look, you may live. Friends advise us and cheer. Friends comfort and strengthen us; but the best advice ever given me by a friend was the advice to put my trust, my faith, my life, my all, in Jesus Christ.

> "O Light, that followest all my way,
> I yield my flickering torch to Thee;
> My heart restores its borrowed ray,
> That in Thy sunshine's blaze its day
> May brighter, fairer be."

Down in Wall Street, in front of the old Subtreasury building, is the bas-relief of a man kneeling

in prayer. His time was one of fear and darkness. The cause to which he had dedicated his life, for which he had already led brave men to death, and in which rested now the hopes of freedom for all the years, was sinking fast into the night of irretrievable disaster. Burdens too heavy to be borne rested upon his shoulders; appalling responsibilities overwhelmed his soul.

But he did not resign; he did not withdraw. For a moment he did not go forward. It was very dark. The way had eluded him; and so he stopped, and looked up, and set his course again by the great Light.

That vast company of men and women who believe in the God of Washington are fully persuaded that the hope for every disarmament conference, faced as they are by problems of age-old antipathies and jealousies, and beset by traditions, is not in the wisdom of statesmen, not in the counsel of experts, but in the Light, that great Light that showed George Washington the way from Valley Forge to Yorktown, and that guided Abraham Lincoln from Gettysburg to Appomattox. It is to nations as well as to individuals that He speaks when He says,

"I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

15

THE CALL OF THE NEW CRUSADE

Text: II Timothy 2:3. *"Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."*

It was an evening in early February, 1918. I stood with Canon Braithwaite under the high arched roof of Winchester Cathedral, in the city of Britain's early kings. The venerable clergyman lifted his torch, and flung its beams among the mighty columns of the ancient church. For nearly half a century it has been his sacred charge.

Choir-boys were at practice in an adjoining room. Their song floated to us across the twilight, and in my fancy became the voices of the sculptured figures that seemed to leave their places in the niches of the walls and to stand about us in the air.

Then the Canon spoke: "On the Norman tiles where you stand to-night, Crusaders knelt to receive their last communion. From this holy place they went forth to cross the Channel and take up their long journey toward the sepulchre of Christ."

In a few days I had crossed the Channel; a few days more and I had seen the small but rapidly growing army of my country marching up the battle-roads of France, entering communicating trenches to take position in the line that stood between Metz and Toul, in the shadow of Mount Sec.

And as the lads in khaki, who had come so far to give so much, took up the great advance, I cried: "These are crusaders, too! These are the knights of the twentieth century, defenders of the faith, path-finders of the new era, the era that, please God, shall be the Era of the Soul!"

Now, all crusades have three things in common: first, a holy cause; second, a vast company of youth; third, a great consecration.

Every crusade has demonstrated the consecration of a vast company of youth to a holy cause. The supreme ordeal of our tragic past has been no exception to the rule. For what a cause our brothers and our sons went forth to break their lances upon the distant fields of Europe! They journeyed for the rights of the helpless and as defenders of the weak. They rode to crush the iron hand of militarism and to end the sway of kings. They dared and died to vindicate the might of right.

Granted that every great mass movement that has led civilisation forward has suffered from false leaders, selfish and traitorous chiefs; granted that it has been an easy cloak to hide the ulterior motives of the baser sort; but always, in the large, it has been unselfish and worthy; and in the end it has prevailed because it has possessed the omnipotence of truth.

To-day we are still perfecting the physical census of our blood-letting; we are counting our wounded and our dead. What do we find? Millions of young men marching up from the South and down from the North, out of the East and the West. Millions of young men training and battling and dying. Millions of young men maimed. Millions of young men dead.

Once again the record has shown that middle life

and old age do not bear the physical burden of armed conflict. The World War stands as a stupendous spectacle of youth, a spectacle of youth in a consecration of limb and life and soul, the like of which the eyes of the world had never before seen, but a consecration that, while it began with those who faced the battle's hardness under the flares of No Man's Land, in burning sky and upon sinister sea, did not end with them.

To these were joined in a consecration as vital as theirs, the mothers and fathers and wives and sisters and brothers who brought the men who fought as priceless offerings to the altars of freedom; and who, turning not away, held them to their tasks in fidelity of purpose and with unselfishness of service and sacrifice.

And when the war-clouds that even yet hang above us have all cleared away, this great consecration will remain as the chief compensation for the struggle. The world has learned to suffer and to give on a scale never before practised or realised; she has learned to suffer and give all.

Upon us, who were not called upon to surrender life rests a very grave responsibility. If we are to be worthy of the dead who withheld nothing, and if we are to finish the "sacred task undone," then we must make their consecration secure and permanent. It will be a tragedy beyond comprehension if the spiritual values established by that colossal struggle are lost or obscured. To ever return to pre-war attitudes and relationships, to ever take up again the mad race for gold and gain and arrogant national power, to think once more in terms of selfish individualism, aloof nationalism and narrow sectarianism, will be to strike with palsy the arm we lifted for international right-

eousness, will be to invalidate the world's investment of blood and treasure. And it is here that America is tempted as is no other land.

How shall we hold the great consecration? Let there be no evasion of the question. Only by a new crusade. No mean or small thing will attract those who were joined to the death-grapple of the bloody past. True, some have found and will follow the line of least resistance; others will loll on in ease and idleness; but the vast company is impatient with soft words, for their souls have been elemental harps upon which the fingers of Fate have struck the chords of vast and vicarious sacrifice.

A young lieutenant in a letter to his father, written from France shortly after the signing of the armistice, said, "I have learned one thing, father; having given my life to my country, I can never take my life back again."

William I. Grundish, a private of the engineers, wrote in the trenches, "Facing the Shadows." It is a classic that will live beyond the brief span of the man who penned it.

"When I behold the tense and tragic night
Shrouding the earth in vague, symbolic gloom;
And when I think that ere my fancy's flight
Has reached the portals of the inner room
Where knightly ghosts, guarding the secret ark
Of brave romance, through me shall sing again,
Death may ingulf me in eternal dark;
Still I have no regret nor poignant pain.
Better in one ecstatic, epic day
To strike a blow for glory and for truth,
With ardent, singing heart to toss away
In Freedom's cause my eager youth,

Than bear, as weary years pass one by one,
The knowledge of a sacred task undone."

To such as these we must address ourselves, to such as these the Church must speak, for into the hands of such as these the programmes of society are now intrusted.

What is the new crusade, the great crusade, that shall hold from age to age in high and steadfast consecration the world's vast company of youth? It is industrial and social, political and religious, all of these in *one*. For us to advance in divisions, for us to go forward in separation, even though we move in parallel lines, will be to fail. Society can vitalise only one crusade at a time. For the present crisis, so challenging to all the worthy passions of the aroused human heart, there must be essential unity in spirit and in action. And in what shall we find our unity?

Economically we stand in violent divisions. At one extreme men have been saying, "The war is over. We must hurry back to old conditions—*master* and *man*. The concessions made by capital in order that a united front be presented to the common foe are no longer necessary. We have been too long in re-establishing the old order."

At the other extreme the violent voice of the wilderness cries without ceasing: "The millennium has come to Russia. Let us enter in."

Never are we going back to old conditions. Never again will it be master and man. The worker has learned his human values. He has eaten of the fruit of the tree of knowledge. He has become wise. Up from the mines and out of the factories he came to join the universal brotherhood of labour and suffering.

He knew the hand of the skilled surgeon; he felt the touch of the trained nurse. He found himself to be the first essential in all orderly and constructive processes of civilisation.

Everywhere he is saying and will say words like these, words that I heard first in the Lamb House, London, early in 1918, "Never again will we consent to the holding of millions of acres of land in the hands of the unproducing few, while we have no bit of ground under God's free sky."

No, it will be master and man never again!

What of Russia, Russia betrayed and crucified? We will not be deceived. She has not found the millennium. But let the judgments we bring upon her now be tempered by the knowledge of the reasons for her plight. Her children suffer for the sins of their fathers. She is in the grip of the inexorable law of compensation. She reaps where she sowed, and it is the irony of fate that the harvesting hands must be slashed by sword-grass they did not plant.

We will not be deceived, but we shall be fools indeed if we refuse to learn the lessons Russia teaches. Only by fidelity to the principles that made us a nation, that established us first in freedom and then in unity; only by continued loyalty to the rich guaranties of the Constitution, and by being willing to interpret these guaranties so as to meet the needs of the new times upon which we have come, shall we avoid disaster.

The hour is one of expression and not of repression. Let no sudden panic tempt us to deny the faith in which we have thus far prevailed. Give Liberty her eyes and her voice, and she will find her way. Bind her, and blind her, and she will go mad.

No, we will not follow the terror of the Steppes;

but how shall we discover the high ground that stands between the quicksands of the two extremes?

And how shall we find the spirit with which to address ourselves to the as yet unsolved racial problems of our times, problems that have grown in a generation from snapping curs to sinister monsters, problems that threaten our domestic safety as well as the peacefulness of our international relationships?

Statesmanship has no answer. The whole political horizon is black with threatening clouds of prejudice and misunderstanding. Are we to approach these momentous matters in a spirit of selfish partisanship? To be Republicans or Democrats, to be less than Americans, now is to be incompetent; *and to save America we must serve the world.*

There is no answer for the question of society in the schoolroom of economics alone. Industrial reform is inadequate, and until civilisation shall find the grace to love the unlovable she will continue to fill her streets with lynchers and her seas with fleets of suspicion.

God pity the world if we go forward now in an industrial crusade and a social crusade and a political crusade; God pity the world if we move forward divided!

There is room and time and strength for only one great forward movement. It must be industrial, social, and political; *and Christianity must dominate the whole.*

This is Christianity's hour. Christianity must find the high ground that stands between the two extremes, that leads at length in peace to justice and brotherhood. The brotherhood message of Jesus, so long reserved to individuals, must be applied to governments as well. "I am my brother's keeper"; and by as much

the state is brother to the nations, and no state has the moral right to exist free and silent anywhere while another state is bound by chains it cannot break.

Patriotism begins at home; it does not end there; the security of remoteness is now denied us; the geography of distance has been destroyed. There are no separating seas. The farthest tribe has become our next-door neighbour. We are all hopelessly bound together.

It took a League of Nations to win the World War. Without unity among the nations and a working programme of agreement we cannot win the peace.

That there are dangers in this new way; that grave problems beset the new order, will not be denied. We admit that in the conclusion of logic, and by the record of what has gone before, there is for us no final evidence, no conclusive testimony. The evidence is, "the evidence of things not seen."

Ours is an adventure of faith. But we have tried every other road. We have tested every other promise. We have gone to the end of the trail with traditional statesmanship and we have found there a catastrophe that almost wrecked man. Whether in desperation of despair, or in the eagerness of hope new-born, destiny has spoken, faith has decreed, and we must give the new order a chance to be.

Perhaps I feel as I do because I have seen Europe a sepulchre, because my eyes have rested upon the fields that lie before Verdun as thickly pitted by shell-fire as a man's face is pitted from a dread disease, because my hands have dripped the blood of men who died against my breast, or perhaps it is because I have not ceased to pray, *"Our Father."*

Such, then, is the spiritual basis for the new cru-

sade. It has no backward look. It presses toward the mark of the high calling, and its voice cries mightily, "Be strong!"

What, then, of youth, the stalwart full-grown and morally seasoned now, who bore so large a part in the stupendous struggle, and what of these others who follow in his train? In the programme of Christianity, in the challenge of Christ, here and nowhere else does he find his adequate incentive, his task big enough, his moral equivalent for war.

Youth, which is thy darling?
Dull ease, tame prosperity, craven safety?
Or Danger, strong young danger, clean-limbed danger,
Brave-hearted danger?

State, wouldst thou win youth unto thy service?
Call him not then with rich emoulments and pomp of office,
But dare him, rather, to risk his fortune,
To burn behind him the bridges of mammon,
And, toil and pain and loss and death embracing,
To win for thee thy glorious future.

Church, wouldst thou win youth unto thy service?
Call him not with plaintive music and soothing sermon;
Invite him not with sectarian difference;
Never for him expunge and soften the words of Jesus;
But gird on him the sword and buckler,
And send him forth with trumpet sounding
The call of Christ's crusade.

This is youth's darling:
Not ease, nor comfort, nor tame prosperity, nor craven safety.
But Danger—strong young danger, clean-limbed danger,
Brave-hearted danger.

16

THE CURSE OF COWARDICE

Text: St. Mark 14: 71. *"He began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not this man of whom ye speak."*

The heaviest blow suffered by Jesus on the day He stood before the high priest was not the one struck by the officer of the court; it was the denial of Peter.

The Master who gave His life rather than renounce the truth, who swerved not an inch from exact honesty Himself, found one of His own and closest companions at the first approach of the great crisis toward which His entire ministry had moved from the beginning, fleeing like a craven. It was as though a veteran of many training-camps and numerous skirmishes had galloped to the rear at the first roar of artillery when the main battle opened.

And what must have been the remorse of Peter when he came to himself,—no man can imagine it. Only the grace of the One against whom he had sinned saved the impetuous disciple from permanent disgrace and perhaps self-destruction. But as quick as was the wrong, so quick were the penitence and the call for forgiveness when by the crowing of the cock Peter was faced by his cowardly rejection.

What is the curse of cowardice? The curse of cowardice is *falsehood.* The coward *is* a lie. It is possible for a coward to speak words that are in them-

selves true,—a craven has lifted the sword of a hero, but it is not possible for a coward to *be* true. Truth casteth out fear; where one is, the other is not.

The curse of cowardice is *selfishness.* Peter feared for his own safety. Jesus was the victim of *power,* power that could, as Peter saw it, crush Him. To save his own life, Peter said "No" to his best friend.

The curse of cowardice is *cruelty.* Peter's denial caused Jesus to suffer as no weapon-thrust could have.

The curse of cowardice is *shame.* A shamed man is indeed a hapless fellow. One may rise from a hundred defeats with strength of soul increased, but the man who must despise himself is without hope.

The curse of cowardice is *defeat.* There is never an excuse for failure. A man may fail completely in the eyes of the world, just as Jesus did, and yet gloriously succeed. Real success is spiritual, and may or may not be crowned outwardly. Fundamentally the coward is always and altogether a failure. He may silence criticism for the moment; he may even drive an army from the field when he is conscious of overwhelming odds; but his defeat is inevitable, for it is within him.

To sum up: All cowardice is moral cowardice. There are physical giants who are moral cowards, but they are physical cowards too invariably in a great crisis. Men frail and of little brawn, who with supreme self-denial face some Waterloo of the soul, would have gone as quietly to destruction on a battlefield.

The man who in a sudden rush of terror when under fire for the first time turns and flees may or may not be a coward. If not, he will come back to-morrow with the determination of a dozen ordinary men.

Peter denied *quickly.* We must prepare to make prompt decisions, to say "Yes" or "No" quickly. Such preparation is heart-preparation. There was no time for Peter to argue with himself when he was asked as to his discipleship. Had his heart been right, right as it was a little later, his "Yes" would have been as quick and resolute as was his "No."

He *repeated his denial.* Once started in the wrong direction, it is easier to go on than it is to go back. Peter fixed his course with his first "No," and the second and third denials were in the line of least resistance. We should have a care for each step taken, each decision made, not only because of immediate values, but because of the effect of present actions on future conduct.

Peter *became angry, and he swore.* Elsewhere in the Bible appears the record that when the servant maid insisted that he was a disciple of Jesus, Peter used an oath to emphasise his denial. It is human nature to bluster when one is caught in a compromising position; to make a loud noise in lieu of an argument, to shout in a vain effort to drown the quieter voice of reason. An oath is always an apology for good sense. The profane man is generally a puppet or a weakling. A curse is the blunderbuss of a coward.

Peter *repented.* There are many who deny as Peter did; and for those the example of this vigorous, impetuous man is most heartening. He was sorry for his sin, ashamed of his cowardice; and he was more, he was repentant. He did not go on in his evil way, and he did not follow the example of Judas:—he did not slay himself. Like a man he right-about faced, confessed his error, and sought forgiveness. No one of us need be discouraged, utterly dismayed. We too

have the privilege of turning back from sinful wanderings.

Peter *was forgiven.* Jesus Christ can make the weak strong, the sinful pure, the coward brave. This is the great lesson we may learn from Peter. Just as it is "Christ in us the hope of glory," so it is the Son of God who "casteth out fear." No Christian has reason to be afraid, and the follower of the Lord ought to be everywhere, in all circumstances, the "bravest of the brave."

17

"COME ON ! LET'S GO !" *

Text: St. John 14:31. *"Arise, let us go hence."*

At an International Conference of Christian Endeavourers, the words which serve as the subject of this chapter were adopted as a slogan and rallying-call for a new forward campaign.

They came, of course, with all the patriotic associations of the great war in which youth played so large a part. Upon the platform when the slogan was suggested were men in uniform only recently returned from overseas, and the speaker who first used it had himself heard the words under all the stern circumstances of armed conflict.

"Come on! Let's go!" Perhaps no other words were so expressive as these of the spirit of the ranks in the bloody times now happily gone. They were slang before the war, but in the war they were glorified. They were part of the great fusing process that brought men and women of all grades and classes together in one great purpose. They belonged to officers and doughboys alike; they were among the most dynamic words of the service. They were heard in canteens and in Y. M. C. A. huts as "buddies" starting for their billets called to each other; they were the easy

* This sermon and the three following were preached as a series entitled, "Sermons from the Service."

words of rest-camps and replacement-stations; and they were the stern and fateful words that broke the agony of suspense for men who had waited for the zero hour and the charge.

At three o'clock one February morning during the intensive fire that preceded the great raid upon battalion headquarters at Seicheprey, a runner from a battery of the Fifth Field Artillery, then in support of the First Division, which was holding the famous Toul sector, plunged into a dugout canteen; straight through the double gas curtains he came, and on into the adjoining room where forty-seven worn-out men were sleeping in the stupor of exhaustion that even artillery fire does not disturb. A battery had been hit, hard hit; fresh men were needed for cannon-fodder.

Presently a sergeant, followed by one, two, three, four, five, lads, stumbled out of the quarters. Swiftly, while yet in the grip of sleep, they adjusted their accoutrements, and then lined up in front of the counter for the hot coffee that was waiting for them. Another minute, and they were ready. The sergeant shot a quick word or two at the runner, who had come fast and was spent, ran his eyes appraisingly over the privates in front of him, and then leaped into the narrow entrance with two words barked from his lips, "Let's go!" And out into the storm and dark and death five men followed him.

To-night, as again I see them go, I think of twelve men who have been seated together in a quiet chamber, set back from the noises of an Eastern city,—twelve men who have known much of hardship and bitterness together, twelve men; there had been one more, but already he had gone out. Under the magic of their leader's words and presence eleven men had forgotten

all of their trials and disappointments; from the stern facts of their lives they had passed to dreams of power, and their captain's warnings are for the moment little understood.

Then abruptly he terminates the conference; suiting his words to action, he says, "Arise, let us go hence"; and forth he leads them to Gethsemane and Calvary.

It is a far call from the first century of the Christian era to the twentieth, and a yet farther call from Jerusalem to Toul, from the programme of the Prince of Peace to the bloody doings of the great war. But for me the words of the sergeant spoken in the noisome dugout are forever and inseparably associated with the words of Jesus in the upper room, "Let's go," and "Arise, let us go hence." Nor will I rest quietly under the charge, should any one be so blind as not to see my purpose, that thus to relate the two is to misrepresent my Lord, is to give His sanction to armed conflict.

The words of the sergeant spoken as he plunged into the dark stairway of that front line cellar four years ago have three implications in common with the words of Jesus.

They were a clear and unmistakable call to men to leave their present position; to turn their backs upon rest and safety; comfort and comrades; and to go out into darkness and danger. The tired fellows who jammed their helmets down upon their heads that morning in the old Y. M. C. A. canteen had earned their night of rest, earned it in the snow and mud of caving trenches; but the sergeant said, "Let's go," and they went.

When Jesus spoke to His eleven disciples in the upper room of Jerusalem, His words meant vastly more than any hearer dreamed; they were the fateful

call to leave the old life forever; the old life with its bitter but with its sweet; the old life with its rich companionship, with its conversations as congenial men walked together through the restful open places of the back country; with evenings spent with friends, its ministry of comfort and healing when the great Physician placed His physical hands upon the heads of the sick and distressed; the old life with its Mount of Transfiguration and its triumphal entry; the old life with its moments of glory.

From all of this He said, "Arise, let us go hence"; and from the old life which had found Him so often the misunderstood and maligned, which had left Him hungry and homeless before the gates of unfriendly cities, which had stamped Him with the mark of shame and held Him up to ridicule and scorn, which had set the people He loved against Him, and turned followers into traitors; the old life of Nazareth and Bethlehem, of Bethany and Galilee, of Capernaum and Samaria and Jerusalem, of weary feet and hungry soul,—the old life was now forever behind Him; from it He was turning deliberately away.

The second implication follows naturally the first. The men who hurried out of the dugout on the old Toul sector that winter morning left it not in retreat, but to go forward. The words used by the sergeant were never words of retreat. "Let's go" meant always, and whatever the risks and the odds, "Let's go on, and on, and on!"

Years ago I heard a story of a drummer boy of Napoleon who, wounded and dying, had been propped against the caisson of a broken gun by his solicitous but on-hurrying comrades. At length the tide of battle turned against France. Back came the broken

squares in precipitous flight. A marshal saw the lad, who seemed asleep, and shook him roughly. "Beat the retreat!" he cried. "Beat the retreat!" The boy's eyes fluttered open, closed, and fluttered open again. In surprise he looked about; and then, becoming conscious of the rout, he replied: "Sir, I cannot beat a retreat. I do not know how to beat a retreat. Desaix never taught me how. But I can beat a charge that will call the dead to life. I beat the charge at the Pyramids. I beat it at Mt. Tabor and the Bridge of Lodi. Sir, shall I beat it now?" The fire in the soul of the dying boy touched into flame again the failing embers in the heart of the marshal, and he shouted, "Then, hero child of France, beat the charge." And over the dead and dying, over the cannon and artillery, the lad propped against the broken gun, his own life-blood ebbing fast, drummed the way to victory.

Often in the great war men did not know what their destination was, nor had they seen before the rugged path their feet must climb, the dangers their courage must dare. But always they knew that "Let's Go" meant straight ahead, forward march.

Returning from France I found myself on the same ship with a group of Red Cross officials, among them Mr. Abner Larned, a public-spirited and distinguished business man of Detroit. From him I heard for the first time what is now one of the finest stories of the war. Mr. Larned was on the *Tuscania* when she was destroyed by a submarine off the coast of Ireland. Rescued by the crew of a destroyer, he kept to the deck while the swift scout of the sea rushed hither and thither through the gathering darkness, searching for the remaining survivors.

When the quest was about to be abandoned, off the starboard quarter singing was heard. Immediately the little vessel set her course by the sound; and, coming on carefully through the gloom, discovered a catamaran crowded with soldiers who were singing at the top of their youthful lungs, "Where do we go from here, boys? Where do we go from here?" Adrift upon a winter sea, helpless and freezing, with little hope of rescue, their hearts were strong, and still responded to the marching-orders of their country's great advance.

And when Jesus led His disciples down from the Jerusalem conference into the night and on toward the Garden, whatever may have been His knowledge, humanly speaking, of the ordeal that was before Him, His companions were in ignorance of the tragedy so soon to follow. They were under marching-orders, and they were going forward; this they knew, for always He led them forward; but they saw only the next step; the great events of the future were hidden from them, and well it was! And well it is for us that life is not at once a complete revelation. Were we in possession of the facts, our faith would often fail. Better for us the command, "Arise and go," with the terms and conditions of our going sealed orders to be opened in the morning.

"I do not ask to see the distant scene,
One step enough for me."

The third implication is the implication of leadership; leadership that leads, that discovers the path and shows the way, that sets the pace and shares the dangers; a leadership that is companionship as well as command. It was not, "You go," that early morning

in the cellar. It was "Let's go." And, as I saw the last man of the six pass through the gas curtains, I knew that the sergeant who went up first would never have been anywhere else than in front of the men he was taking into mortal danger.

And it was Jesus, not Peter, nor James nor John, who said, "Arise, let us go hence." It was Jesus who led the little company across the brook Kidron; it was Jesus who after the last disciple had been left to slumber in forgetfulness at the edge of Gethsemane went yet a little farther. Always it was Jesus who led the way; and, whatever men may say of Him, they will not say that He sent His followers forth alone, or that He thrust them into dangers He Himself refused to accept.

How suggestively eloquent are His words, "Arise, let us go hence," and how illuminating His "Come with me; come with me!"

These words are more than the words of an ancient invitation; they are the call of Jesus Christ to every man and woman, His call to you and me. To us He is saying, "Arise, let us go!" Let us leave the past behind. Let us go forth from the evil or unworthy surroundings of our lives, and press toward the better things, toward the heights of happiness, toward the mark of the high calling which is in Christ Jesus.

Are you living an unclean and a sinful life, a double life, a life of which you are sick, a life of broken vows, a life of wrongs against another? Arise and go!

Are you living short of your best, unworthy of your own ambitions and of the hopes of those who love and trust you; living indolently, slovenly; living merely to fill the hours? Arise and go!

Are you living in fear,—fear of discovery, fear of

disease, fear of defeat, fear of death? Are you living selfishly, successfully, even brilliantly, but for yourself alone, dancing to the music of indulgence, chasing the short-lived butterfly of pleasure? Do not delay, but arise! Arise and go!

Are you living with your losses and your griefs, holding the broken vessels of memory, dwelling with your vanished joys in yesterday? Arise, and go!

Are you living with doubts,—doubt of God and doubt of good, doubt of friends, and doubt of yourself?

Are you living in the uncertainty of delayed decisions, in the enervating atmosphere of procrastination; living in promises which should long since have become programmes? If you are, if you are, arise and go!

Leave where you are, and start for where you ought to be. Turn from your secret sin, your pet indulgence; turn from your shame, turn from your griefs, your self-pity and complaint; rise from the ashes of your losses; take up again the task your bravest hopes once fixed upon. Put out the fires of your rest-camp, and forward march!

And, as you go, remember that before you started, that before you gave attention to His words and heeded the command, that before you rose to go, He rose to go before you. The forward-leading road is often dark and full of unanticipated mysteries, but it will be light unto your feet, for He is the lamp of its way.

For "yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me."

18

"LAFAYETTE, WE ARE HERE!" *

Text: Ecclesiastes 11:1. *"Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days."*

Whether General Pershing actually used the words as attributed to him or not, or whether they represent the genius for the eternal fitness of things of some newspaper correspondent, "Lafayette, we are here," more eloquently than any other words, signalised America's entry into the war. They were words that gave a reason and interpreted a spirit, words that the humblest man in the ranks quickly understood, words the significance of which did not escape the most casual reader of American history.

"Lafayette, we are here,"—here to pay a debt, or, rather, here to return in kind service for service rendered; here in what, with all else that it represents and means, is a supreme expression of appreciation for the great and generous young Frenchman who was one of the brightest lights that shone in the darkest night of the Revolution.

The cynical times in which we live have produced jazz in literature as well as in music, and some of the fairest stories and finest traditions of a nation's life are reset and revised until for the reverence with

* Sermon preached on Lincoln's Birthday.

which they were once received is substituted a satirical familiarity, a superficial and disgusting half-tolerance. George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, Ulysses S. Grant, and Abraham Lincoln,—Lincoln who long escaped the common fate,—have all been victims of these panderers in print, who cultivate and feed the jaded and neurotic literary appetite.

The Marquis de Lafayette has not been spared. But what is the story, the real story, memories of which sent waves of emotion over the nation when "Lafayette, we are here," was flashed under the oceans and across the continents?

Lafayette was a youth of nineteen when he came to throw in his lot with the Continentals; he was born of a distinguished line, the son of a soldier killed in the service of France. At a military dinner in Metz early in 1776 the generous impulses of his heart were first stirred by the story of the American Revolution. He was a young officer of the Guards, and under orders; but he determined to join the forces of Washington. On being ordered back by the French king, when he was about to sail from a Spanish port, he seemed at first to acquiesce in his sovereign's orders, but later escaped, and with Baron de Kalb and others sailed hurriedly for America in an uncompleted ship. He was received by Congress with open arms, and for him Washington formed a high and most affectionate opinion, which he never ceased to hold. When intrigue had reached its depths and the great commander cried out that he wished every foreigner back in Europe, he concluded, "Excepting Marquis de Lafayette."

While the commission of major-general voted the young Frenchman was hardly warranted, he never

proved himself unworthy, nor did any man use his honours more effectively for the struggling people whose representatives bestowed them. Where other officers, native as well as foreign, failed in the field or were false to the trust of their leader, Lafayette gave an unbroken example of loyalty as well as of brilliancy. At Brandywine, where he was wounded, he led his men with distinction, and at Valley Forge, where his command on Barren Hill was attacked by the enemy in overwhelming numbers, he demonstrated his ability when on the defensive.

In 1779 he returned to France to add his voice to the plea for additional help from France, now also at war with England. In 1780 he returned to America, successful, and was at once sent to meet Benedict Arnold, who was invading Virginia. From his private purse Lafayette provisioned and clothed his men, and plunged into a campaign that did not end until Cornwallis, the boaster, surrendered at Yorktown. Edward Everett has spoken eloquently of the youthful Marquis as he led personally one of the assaults in this fateful siege of the war. Having returned to France again, Lafayette learned of the successful termination of the Revolution, at Cadiz, where he had put in with a force of 26,000 men he was leading to reinforce Washington.

Lafayette made two more visits to the country he had so generously served, and was entertained as the guest of the nation. On the first, in 1784, he was with Washington at Mt. Vermon, and on the second, forty years later, he covered the country in a tour of triumph.

The services of Lafayette to his own country, while they did not reveal him as a successful political leader

and administrator in great and complicated issues, continued to present him as a sincere lover of democracy, a gallant defender of the persecuted, and an unfailing servant of the people.

Under the constitutional monarchy which preceded the French Revolution, he was commander-in-chief of the National Guard, which enrolled more than three million men. It was Lafayette who suggested the substitution of the tricolour for the old standard of royalty. Always he was against the imperial ambitions of Napoleon. He advocated trial by jury, popular representation, emancipation of the slaves, freedom of the press, abolition of titles (and renounced his own), the suppression of privileged orders, and freedom of worship; and he incurred the undying hatred of the Jacobins by his defence of the Protestants. His head was demanded by the Revolution, and he escaped, only to be arrested by Austria and imprisoned for five years, first in Austria and then in Prussia.

Than Marquis de Lafayette, Citizen Lafayette by his own choice, no man has ever appeared in public life who manifested nobler instincts and finer courage. His contribution to America can hardly be overestimated. More than the men and arms he finally brought, more than the money he contributed so freely and largely, more than the very considerable value of his military leadership, was the weight of his moral and spiritual decision, which strengthened the morale of the Colonists when faith had found her anchors dragging in the storm.

Not much of similarity is there between this youthful devotee of freedom, who sprang from the loins of Old-World aristocracy, and the gaunt and at times uncouth Abraham Lincoln, whose birth the world re-

members with us. But one thing they had in common, —the passion for truth, which, when it fires the human soul, melts down the gold of feudal crowns and burns up the superficial barriers of classes.

Lafayette and Lincoln brought their talents, brought their all, to the same altar of service.

One was a very gallant, a very generous, gentleman; a Frenchman who loved freedom so unselfishly that he became a citizen of the world: the other, the saviour of his country, who because of his suffering and his service, who because of his attributes of mind and heart, which in him assumed proportions unsurpassed, unreached, since Jesus, became a man for the ages.

There is a story told of a youthful prince who was sent in quest of the most wonderful thing in the world. He came early to a valley in which bloomed an exquisite flower. Entranced by its perfect symmetry, its delicate colouring, and its intoxicating aroma, he declared his search ended, and lay down to sleep. When he awoke, he found himself beside a withered stalk that gave forth noisome odours.

Disappointed, he went on his way. Now his journey led him to the heights. Above him towered the monarch of the mountains, snow-clad, ice-crowned, and robed in mists shot through with flaming gold, poured down from rivers of the sun. His soul took on a mood of exaltation. "O most sublime, most wonderful, art thou!" he cried. But even as he spoke, the ranges shook beneath him; great thunders rolled; the lights went out on the peaks; and darkness came like death. The hidden furies of the inner earth broke forth; they poured their liquid wrath down all the frozen steeps; they clove the summit from its base to its crown, and hurled its granite breast upon the cities of the plain.

The voices of the dying came like sounds from many waters, on the rushing winds.

The prince in horror sank upon the crumbling path; his voice was dumb; his limbs refused his will; he waited for his end. Then strong arms lifted him. When he awoke, the night of wrath had passed. He lay again beside the withered stalk and in the distance the shattered mountain raised its humbled head. But he was not alone. By his side now stood a man, clean-limbed and golden-haired, deep-chested and broad of shoulders; his eyes were as the eagle's, direct, piercing, and far-seeing; his forehead broad; his head of great proportions; and, when he smiled, the earth seemed full of laughing children.

The prince inquired, "You brought me here?" and the man replied, "I brought you here, and I will bear you forth"; and, suiting his action to his words, he lifted the prince and as one who walks for joy without a burden carried him from the valley of death. Then cried the prince, "Man, *thou* art most wonderful, for thou canst lift me when I fall; thou canst save me when I faint; thou canst comfort me when I fear; for thou dost serve, and thou dost never die."

In Lincoln next to Jesus the world finds to-day the finest attributes and most generous powers of idealised human character. Because of him she cries, "Man is most wonderful," and, whatever the differences between Lincoln and Lafayette, wherever their varying degrees of genius, they had in common a great spiritual impulse that fructified in a life of unselfish service.

"Lafayette, we are here." These were the words of an hour of national exaltation, an hour in which we knew ourselves turning away from rivers of blood out of which we had sluiced sticky, dripping gold, an hour

that found us entering upon a new era in international relationships, an era of ministry, the era of the soul. And while we spoke to France and called the name of Lafayette, our words were for all the broken and discouraged forces of the Allies. To England and Italy and Belgium, yea, and to Germany and Austria and Russia, to the whole world, they meant: "We are here to lend our aid; we are here to make our offering, to bring our contribution; we have come to suffer and bleed and die. We are here to give, and not to get."

The spirit in which the nation said it was what I believe is the spirit of that great text, "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days." There are those who hold that the spirit of this familiar Scriptural passage is the spirit of a wise and far-seeing commercial maxim, that here is a charge for men to make ventures in trade in order that they may receive a large return for their expenditure. This view is thought by some to be supported by the statement concerning the good woman in Proverbs 31:14, "She is like the merchant ships; she bringeth her bread from afar." But so far as I am concerned such an interpretation is far removed from the spirit of Ecclesiastes or the Preacher.

I believe that the only justifiable interpretation is: "Do good without thought or even hope of return. Do good in the most unlikely and unpromising, the most discouraging quarters. Do good, and then forget it." The text is also clear in its statement of the unfailing law of compensation. "Thou shalt find it after many days." Good will surely return to you, but this, which in course of time will certainly result, is not to be the motive for the deed.

It would take a vivid imagination to detect an ul-

terior purpose behind Lafayette's visit to America and his service under Washington. For him there was nothing of selfish profit in it; dangers, financial losses, pain, mental anguish,—to these he opened his arms. Death seemed the only sure termination for the adventure.

And the purpose of the American people in entering the great war will not be questioned, will not be misunderstood, when discriminating history has been written. The carelessly spoken words of an ambassador, living too close to scenes of partisan controversy to see clearly served to clarify the minds of the American people as to their purposes and only objective in the supreme physical and spiritual ordeal to which they gave their treasure and their sons.

Is there, then, no hope of a blessing for service rendered, not as the reason, or even a reason, for the service, but as a soul-strengthening inspiration, as an anchor to faith? Yes, there is always the great hope, and more than hope it is; it is the peace of deep assurance. Do good, and good somehow, somewhere sometime, will come back to you. Cast your bread upon the waters, and after many days you will find it, and, finding it, will find that it has been multiplied.

And here is the heart of the matter: You do good and forget; you give and ask for no return. Then in your soul through all subsequent days you carry the blessedness that comes from having done well, the satisfaction of having helped another; and though you may be financially poorer, you are richer in peace. The person who casts his bread upon the waters, with no eagerness to find it again, who gives and forgets, suffers no disillusionment when the return is long delayed, no waste of strength, no loss of mental poise

through impatience. Though he may be happily surprised, he can never be disappointed.

Lafayette lived to hear his name in tones of love upon the lips of the people he had served; he must have died a very happy man. But Lafayette did not live long enough to see the larger returns from his investment. One hundred and forty years were to pass before the children of the Continentals would sweep in mighty reinforcements across the ravished fields of France to lift their shout, "Lafayette, we are here!"

But the greater good was not denied; the richer blessing came, and in it was the salvation of a nation, as in the offering of Lafayette had been the succour of a people.

The bread cast upon the waters, the treasure thrown unselfishly down upon the stream of life, is never lost; always it returns to bless.

That which is passed on with evil purpose is heard from again, too, for the evil returns to curse. "The wages of sin is death"; and "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Daily the papers of the city carry morbid stories of men and women who by some catastrophe have been caught in the meshes of their long-hidden indulgences and excesses; their sin is published. The very delay in the carrying out of the sentence promised upon those who break the law of God, who pervert the finest instincts of the human soul, often lulls men and women into indifference; but let us remember, and may the disaster that has come upon others be a warning, God does not lie. God is not mocked. As a man soweth, that shall he also reap. The wages of sin is death.

But—but the gift of God is life, life eternal, life

through Jesus Christ, "through Jesus Christ our Lord."

To join to this what finer words are there than Lincoln's words, words of faith and courage, words of prophecy, words of admonition, words of consecration?

"It is for us, the living, to be dedicated to the unfinished work which they who fought have thus far so nobly advanced. It is for us to be dedicated to the great task remaining before us; that from these honoured dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

I do not ask, O Lord, a life all free from pain;
I do not seek to be in this vast world of sin
    Without my load and care.
For this I know, the present cross is my eternal gain;
And he who struggling battles on
At last shall enter in and be a victor there.
So Lord, just keep me clean within,
And make me strong to fight;
And I will follow through the din
    From darkness up to light.

19

WHO WON THE WAR? *

Text: St. Luke 22: 24. *"And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest."*

It is a tense moment in an upper room in Jerusalem. The time is the feast of unleavened bread, which was called the passover. Jesus has been in most intimate conference with His disciples, and the Lord's Supper has just been instituted. The tragic words, "Behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table," have just been uttered, and the disciples have been thrown into confusion with their suspicions of one another. It is at this point that Luke enters upon his record, "There was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest."

At first it seems a grotesque, an unexcusable thing, —this wrangle, this petty quarrel, of the disciples, so out of place, so far removed from the spirit in which their Lord has talked and supped with them. We can hardly forgive these men for the false note thrown into the perfect though tragic symphony of the night.

But they were men, men who for days now had lived under the strain of the events just preceding Gethsemane and Calvary. They had listened to words they found themselves less and less able to understand.

* Sermon preached on Washington's Birthday.

Their Master was more and more a mystery as He approached the travail of His soul. They have seen Him in militant mood drive the traffickers from the temple, in triumphant glory pass through the acclaiming multitudes and under the gate of the city. Almost they had touched the sceptre and bowed before the crown. His very miracles now seemed prophetic of an hour close at hand when for the humble seat He would accept the mighty. They are in no mood to catch the deeper meaning of His words, and He knows full well they cannot bear a plainer statement.

If ever men had an excuse for nerves and a clear title to a physical and mental reaction from the exaltation of supreme spiritual experiences, the disciples had. That they remembered the hidden messages of these latter hours after the great ordeal was past is proof conclusive that they, the chosen vessels of His plan, were without vital flaw.

Jesus understood, understood *them,* and so did not overvalue, did not misunderstand their words. He knew their mental and physical state, knew what they had passed through and what they must experience. He was not impatient with them; His rebuke shows no trace of indignation. His attitude is that of a considerate, patient friend or rather father. I cannot imagine Him raising His voice, but so vitalised were the words by His all-possessing Spirit, that, though they no doubt went practically unheeded there, they were never forgotten, and now we know that they were spoken to live forever.

And what a record the lives of these men, who for a moment fell into dispute over rewards and position, —what a record of unselfish ministry their lives reveal! Over the whole world they poured their deeds;

homeless and beset by jealousies and hardships and mortal dangers, they went about doing good, nor did they ever ask again for the places of the mighty.

There are those who seem to find a certain satisfaction out of morbidly interpretating this upper-room experience. Into it they read a curse upon ambition, and from it they draw a spineless, flabby character, not only self-effacing but self-debasing. For this interpretation I have no patience. Strong men climbed the stairs to meet with Jesus in the upper room; strong men took from Him the bread and wine of that first communion; strong men, men of passions held in leash; men of faith who for the moment stumbled in the dark, but stumbled on; stood upon their selfish rights and claimed their own, but then went forth to give their last and all without a treasured thought of self.

Their mistake was the mistake of strength and not of weakness, but their strength was not a mistake. Jesus Christ valued them for the ardour of their youth, for the impatience of their enthusiasm, for their frankness, for their courage, ay, even their recklessness, I imagine. His concern was not because of their high spirits, but that they should release them, invest them, wisely, unselfishly; and there is nothing in the record of that night before Gethsemane's betrayal to indicate that He had a single doubt about the final result.

Jesus Christ called men, called men to follow Him, to carry on His plan, to build His kingdom, men, men of manly attributes and powers. And to such He speaks to-day.

Every great occasion comes upon an hour when those participating in it turn from measuring their strength against the common task to discussing their relative

importance with one another, an hour of rivalry, an hour of jealousy, that may reach proportions of lasting bitterness unless the counsel that saved the disciples in the upper room is given and heeded. Such an hour followed the signing of the armistice, when the absorbing topic of the day in every military organisation of France, for doughboys and officers and among the civilians at home, indeed, between the statesmen of great nations as they faced each other across conference tables, was, "Who won the war?"

We had a speech from Lloyd George in the Commons, and a special order of the day from General Haig; we had a diplomatic but unmistakable statement from Clemenceau; and in the Congress of the United States there were several spokesmen to enumerate the particular instances and ways in which America snatched victory from defeat, and saved the cause of the Allies from irretrievable disaster. Nor is it our purpose to hold a cynical judgment over these "historical statements," or statements in the interests of exact history, as they were sometimes called. For they were all true!

France did win the war. Without the undying faith of her impoverished peasantry, the unyielding courage of her soldiers who fought as men only fight when their fields are overrun, their cities levelled, their homes destroyed, their sons slain by the engines of a ruthless invader, there would have been no triumph for democratic peoples of the earth to have celebrated. Clemenceau was right, eternally right. France, who carries to-day from the Channel to the Alps, the marks of the world's greatest blood-letting, whose children were offered to the red Moloch until his flaming throat was choked,—France, whose cities bore the supreme terror

of that colossal struggle, and whose soul was tried as was the soul of no other land save Belgium,—France won the war; and the people of the earth cry, "Vive la France!"

And Britain won the war; won it in those first days when she refused to condone the offence against international law, and the tearing up of treaties, when she offered up her First Hundred Thousand, forever first in the annals of international chastity and honour; won it with her fleet that kept the seas for freedom, and won it with the stream of her unfailing treasure. Britain won the war.

And America won the war; won it with her idealism, won it by giving voice to the inimitable truth, by defending the at first obscured principles of international justice and honour, and then by bringing her untouched and well-nigh inexhaustible resources of men, of money, and of supplies, to the support of the exhausted Allies; won it with her faith and the morale of her armies. America won the war.

And what shall we say of Belgium and Italy? The part they played even now appears as absolutely indispensable to the success of the common cause. What would have been the result, had Italy turned to the Central Powers, and what the story told in future generations had Belgium opened her boundaries without the siege of Liége and the spoliation of Louvain? The state documents and the orders of generals, the speeches of prime ministers, of princes, and now of senators, are all correct. Even now we are able to evaluate with a fair sense of justice the contribution made by each and every sister nation in that colossal investment of life and treasure.

Let no voice be raised to belittle the offering of any

people, to question the motive of any state; let there be no vain comparisons and no idle boastings. *There is glory enough for all.* He is a poor friend of this or any other nation who seeks so to exalt the place of his country as to shame loyal citizens of another.

The rivalry between organisations of the same army, between divisions and between regiments, between the army and the navy, between the regular and the volunteer,—indeed, rivalries appearing everywhere, were always interesting, generally amusing, and only infrequently really serious. After the armistice the principal theme of story-teller, song-writer, and amateur poet was, "Who won the war?"

I remember a graveyard ballad, the refrain of which began, "Who won the war? Our brigadier. Who won the war? He did it here" (pointing to the head). One of the more caustic answers to the question, and one that always left an unbiased observer under the impression that the speaker had very likely gone on a vacation without making the rather important military arrangements, was, "Who won the war? Why, the M. P" (Military Police). I found upon the whitewashed wall of an old building in Verdun this legend, written with the wet end of a soft brick, "Letters of Victory: M. P. and Y. M. C. A. Oh, but we love our Sunday-school teachers." But this was merely the manifestation of the passing spirit of the hour. There were other things more serious.

I am glad that the false impressions that for a time threatened to work a sad injury to the American Y. M. C. A. have not survived the test-tube of searching truth. Under difficulties that were always appalling, and at times beyond the powers of supermen, the Young Men's Christian Association at home and

abroad rendered a service to the American people that place us forever in the debt of the Red Triangle. Other welfare organisations did well; but the Y. M. C. A. was in a class by itself, because it began operations at the beginning, and even before, and covered the entire theatre of operations, where others limited their activities to a few districts or organisations. The Y. M. C. A. took over the old army exchange, not because it wished to do so, but because the commander-in-chief requested it to do so, and in spite of the fact that the Association leaders knew the perils of the step from the beginning. The exchange had always been the point of complaint in the service; but the job had to be done, the situation was imperative, and the Red Triangle with courage and determination tackled a task that the military authorities themselves confessed their inability to handle.

General Pershing's tribute to the efficiency of the Association at this point is unanswerable unless with those who have prejudices that do not surrender to facts.

It was my privilege to see the Y. M. C. A. under all circumstances incident to war activities, from transport service and home training-camp, embarkation ports, and base hospitals, to huts on the line and in cellars under the "wire" of the advanced trenches. There were mistakes made; a few, only a few, out of thousands who wore the uniform of this great Christian agency were found unworthy of the trust reposed in them; but no department of the service has a finer, cleaner, more glorious record than the Young Men's Christian Association, and in saying this I voice the sentiments of the millions who were ministered to by it.

General Pershing has spoken with an unmistakable

emphasis concerning certain influences at work to discredit the Red Triangle, to rise upon its reported shortcomings and delinquences. Let us not be blind to the bias of such attacks.

Who won the war? It was a great general of the First Division who said, "We could not have won the war without the Red Cross and the Red Triangle."

I found myself after a dreary ride from Nancy in the Association offices on the Rue d'Aguesseau in Paris. There I found Harry Fisher, a former Christian Endeavour State president from Colorado. He was hot with fever and staggering like a wounded man. I tried to get him to bed, but it was no use. "Got to get back," he said. "Promised the fellows." "Got to get back," and back he went, to die with pneumonia. He lies in a quiet churchyard near Le-Fuerta-Bernard. Two other friends of mine who wore the red badge of honour on their sleeves and bore the grace of God within their hearts, were killed in action, one as he lifted a cup of coffee to the lips of a wounded lad in a sunken battery, the other as he leaped forward, unarmed, beside the doughboys he had served in the trenches and from whom he refused to be separated when they went over the top in a charge. No calumny against the memory of these and their kind, no slander against the great organisation whose colours they wore, shall go unchallenged while I have a voice and hearing.

But the question, the real question, Who won the war? is not yet answered. It remains an open question. Some results that for a time appear to be victories are eventually recognised to have been disasters. Some time ago an article was written which was entitled, "Germany's Defeat in the Franco-Prussian War," and who would say to-day that the terms wrung

from a prostrate foe by Bismarck secured to the united German states a lasting triumph? In them were the seeds of a calamity, a calamity that the future historian will insist was inevitable from the beginning. France carried in her soul resentment for the wrong, and waited the hour of final accounting; her humiliation became her strength; she fed the fires of her hate, and kept them banked against the day when the inevitable conflagration should break forth.

And now it is for France to take counsel from the past; now it is for the victorious Allies to learn lessons plainly taught by the disasters that have come upon all peoples who have failed to be just in victory or whose triumphs have not known the quality of mercy. Whatever Germany by her aggressions and barbarities has deserved, there are certain things that righteousness requires of us, and as Germany has paid and is now paying for following Nietzsche rather than Christ, so we shall pay if we fail to obey His greater law; if in our terms and exactions we do not "love our enemies."

The refusal of the United States to participate in material gains from the war is more and more a source of gratification to those who hope for the elimination of armed conflicts and the perfecting of peace. If to this we will now add a generous participation in the affairs of constructive internationalism, we shall win for ourselves the gratitude and confidence of all countries, that will be a surer protection from attack than armies and fleets, and more profitable than tribute levied upon defeated peoples. In eagerness for power, power through the impoverishment of others, is a fundamental weakness that standing armies cannot correct; selfishness hath her own reward, a reward in the coin of bitterness and disaster.

Not only for nations, but for individuals, the lesson is a vital one. The men and women who live for themselves alone, who drive sharp bargains, who exact the pound of flesh, who capitalise the failures and humiliation of others for their own reward, may seem to prosper for a time; but pride goeth before a fall, and the law of compensation knows no favourites. There are times when retribution seems long delayed; indeed, when we do not see it at all; but as a man metes, so shall it be meted unto him; from this judgment there is no escape.

The Father of his Country could have been, and was asked to be, its king instead. But in his mind was no thought of reward, and in his soul was no selfish ambition. When George Washington, the wealthy and already distinguished Virginia planter, broke with his class, and cast in his lot with the poverty-stricken Revolutionists, he had no dreams of power, no illusion as to his personal returns from the adventurer. He embraced misunderstanding, sacrifice, humiliation, and for conscience' sake went to meet poverty and death. He became great because deliberately he turned his back upon greatness. Had he taken stock of his possessions at Mt. Vernon, had he thought of the probability of the confiscation of his estates and the loss of his head, had he hesitated because of the stigma that would attach to his name for turning against his king and his kind, had he said "No" to the invitation of the Continental Congress, he would have passed by Valley Forge and avoided Long Island; he would have escaped the treachery of his generals and the perfidy of Arnold; the Star-Spangled Banner might never have won an anthem; and he might have lived to a ripe old age, a landed gentleman in a white house above the Potomac.

But February 22nd would not be a national holiday, and Byron would never have written,

> "The first, the last, the best;
> The Cincinnatus of the West."

For us there is but one conclusion. Follow the gleam; be true to the light that is given you; do your best; fill to the utmost the place that is opened to you; make a way if none appears; serve unselfishly; live for others; and you need not worry about who won the war or who receives the adulation of the passing hour. You may in full serenity of mind and in absolute confidence of soul leave the final judgment to posterity, and rest your case with God.

20

WHAT IS WAR?*

Text: Psalm 46:9. *"He maketh wars to cease unto the ends of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire."*

What Is War? It is New York, riotously, gloriously alive; her main artery flowing from building line to building line with a mighty human flood, a surging river fed by every racial fountain of the earth. Men and women weeping; strong lads passing by.

What Is War? It is the ocean in a black night with the grey dawn coming out of the east, and icy blasts driving the whitecaps; a foundering ship; men clinging to fragments; babies floating upon cold breasts; and a periscope sinking out of sight.

What Is War? It is a hospital; the bustle of surgeons; the smell of ether; the screech of brakes on a dead wagon; the smile of a nurse; a lad with bandaged eyes, calling for his mother.

What Is War? It is London,—Piccadilly Circus after the "all clear" has sounded; "Bobbies" holding back a frenzied mob; in the distance shrapnel guns spraying the skies where the fleeing air raiders pass; bodies carried from a shattered building; an old man lifted from beneath an infant's spattered crib,—his head a red, red poppy.

* Conclusion of a sermon.

What Is War? It is a troop train pulling out for Dover crowded with leave-expired men; a thousand sobbing, smiling people on the station platform; their faces in the sun, their hands thrown upward, in a never-to-be-forgotten spectacle of farewell.

What Is War? It is Paris; an old woman pushing a cart,—a dog harnessed beneath it. She stops by the curb, as an ambulance passes, and covers her eyes with a corner of her black shawl.

What Is War? It is a graveyard with more crosses than there are oaks in the King's forest.

What Is War? It is the new-class lads of seventeen, marching arm in arm to the registrars; there are nosegays in their lapels, and they are singing the Marseillaise.

What Is War? It is midnight in the railway station at Toul; Red Cross nurses sitting on their "roll-ups" waiting for the dawn; the sound of hostile motors overhead, and rich young voices humming, "Rock of Ages, cleft for me."

What Is War? It is a machine-gun company of the First Division marching up a battle road in front of Menil-le-Tours, singing in a whisper, "There's a long, long trail a-winding."

What Is War? It is a mud-filled trench by the Meuse with a sky-lark calling above the night.

What Is War? It is a dugout at Rambecourt; forty men trapped like moles in a burrow and breathing through gas-masks; sweat pouring from armpits; a burning throat; the horrors of smothering; membranes seeping blood; bursting glands; the frenzy of a failing mind, and a man trying to remember the names of his children.

What Is War? It is six privates, three mules, and

the timbers of an ancient church churned together by a high explosive; other men creeping out and picking up red fragments.

What Is War? It is a barrage laid down upon an open field of Seicheprey; the earth opening, rocks and branches pouring upward; indescribable noises, an orderly hurled high into the air and something that quivers like gelatine falling into a shell-hole half filled with water.

What Is War? It is a father sitting in a swivel chair in a New York office and thinking of a football game that was indefinitely postponed.

What Is War? It is a young woman standing in a cottage door, a baby tugging at her skirts unnoticed; while she reads a cablegram to which there is no answer.

What Is War? It is a mother sitting in an armless rocker, the rungs of which are marred by the nails of a boy's boots, and looking out of a window that faces the east.

What Is War? Taps over a grave,—if there is a grave. A speech in the Chambers, and withered forget-me-nots.

What Is War? It is the sum of all terror and all bravery; of all hates and all ministries; of all cruelty and all tenderness; of all horror and all glory.

What Is War? It is death; it is waste; it is futile.

What Is War? I do not know, for I have seen it.

But God pity us, if we deny, if we forget the courage, the sacrifice, the suffering, the glory, of those who offered themselves upon the red altars of our tragic yesterday. God pity us and turn His face from us, if we repudiate the faith in which the mother gave her son and in which the son gave himself. But God judge

us forever if we profit not by these lessons learned in agonies colossal.

I hate war. I know its folly, for I have watched it waste the substance of the world.

I hate it with terror,—the terror of one who has known the sting of its torture and the frenzy of its fear.

I hate it with passion,—the passion of one who has held its dying against his breast.

I hate it with disillusionment,—the disillusionment of one who has gathered up its bloody fragments.

I hate it with agony,—the agony of one who has sons to be numbered and daughters to be offered should its guns grow hungry again.

I hate war.

I hate it because of the young men it spits upon bayonets and scatters like offal across continents sown to passion and watered with blood.

I hate it because of the child it orphans and the bride it widows.

I hate it because of the betrothed it leaves unmated, the father it makes sonless and the mother it robs of the fruit of her womb.

I hate war.

I hate it because of the unborn slain in the loins of the potential fathers it destroys.

I hate it because of the evil passions it unleashes to feed upon the innocent.

I hate it because of the virgins it casts to the lions of lust.

I hate it for the goodwill it destroys; the truth it perverts; the lie it exalts; the murder it decorates; the brotherhood it rapes, and the black damp of suspicion it hangs over all the councils of men.

I hate war.

I hate it for the crimson bubbles it blows over all the seas and for the poisoned breath it gives the wings of the wind.

I hate it for the men it maims,—bodies mutilated, eyes blinded, limbs severed, faces shut up forever behind masks.

I hate it:—hate it for its ruined cities; hate it for its polluted rivers; hate it for its desecrated altars; hate it for its fences of skulls that girdle the globe.

I hate war.

I hate it for the hearts it has broken.

I hate it for the minds it has crazed.

I hate it for the souls it has damned.

I hate *war,*—but I believe.

And because I believe,—believe that the song of the angels over Bethlehem is a prophecy, believe in the ultimate might of right; because I believe in God and have cast the anchor of my faith behind Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, I seem to see the dawning of the day when the nations shall beat their swords into ploughshares, their spears into pruning-hooks, and when men shall learn war no more,—*forever!*

21

CIVIC GRAFTERS, OR PUTTING RELIGION INTO POLITICS

Text: St. Matthew 22: 21. *"Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's and unto God the things that are God's."*

There are still some Christians who profess to believe that prophetic thunderings against specific evils have no place in the pulpit; who insist that the church should confine herself to preaching the great general truths of the gospel, leaving to men their application in public and private affairs without any other direction than that coming from the individual's conscience.

But Jesus Christ in His day was strikingly like the ancient prophets when He turned His attention toward evil. He was straight from the shoulder and definite. He did not limit His execrations to the dead citizens of Sodom, but fearlessly denounced the hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees of His own time; He was not satisfied when He had reminded His hearers of the wrong-doing of their remote ancestors; He drove the money-changers of His own generation out of the temple.

Indeed, the Galilean was a very unconventional person, and He never ceased to be a humiliation to the chief rulers of the synagogue because of the abruptness of His speech and the utter candour of His criticism of evil whether He found it in low places or in high.

He made the "faith of the fathers" an immediate fact that fearfully embarrassed many of the descendants of the "fathers"; descendants who were quite willing to have sin in the abstract fearfully pommelled, but who yelled, "Stick to the Book," and "Preach the Gospel," when Jesus looked about searchingly and discussed stealing from widows, making long prayers to be heard of men, and turning the house of worship into a den of thieves.

We who come after the heroic prophets and their greater Lord have fallen upon easier times; for, although a few churchmen would even now limit the voice of religion to chanting hymns and making formal petitions, every council of Christendom declares the "whole gospel"; preaches the undivided message of straight limbs and clean hearts, denies that the obligation to feed the soul relieves of responsibility to feed the body, and boldly announces that to inveigh against an evil principle, without smiting an evil fact, is neglect of duty.

Jesus was seldom in harmony with the traditions and customs of the organised church of His day; He spoke too plainly and acted too directly. We are more fortunate.

We are beginning to realise what He meant when He said, "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's." Religion and Patriotism are brothers, and brotherhood is divine. A man cannot be a true Christian without doing his level best to be a true patriot. Christianity in politics will not unite the church with the state, but it will put religion into government, without which every government is insecure and trembles to a fall. If Christianity is not practical it is not even Christian.

Jesus was not a theorist; He was the world's first and greatest Democrat. He ceased not to declare a faith of service; a ministry of sacrifice; a divine, a sufficient redemption that not only raised the dead, but that brought to life the living dead; a ministry that in all of its ministrations used not the past, but the present and the future tenses. Jesus had less to say about the "home over there" than about the home down here. He knew that the man who pays his taxes, and looks after his immediate dooryard, would not abuse his privileges when admitted to the house "not made with hands." Ah, and with what infinite tenderness He cried, "I go to prepare a place for you; . . . that where I am, there ye may be also." How perfectly He related the spiritual kingdom, the triumphant future existence of the soul, to the humdrum responsibilities of our existence in the here and now! He spoke of gold-paved streets with far-eyed vision and without forgetting that His feet were on the sun-baked paths of Judea.

Jesus would have supported Jane Addams in her work among the city's poor,—and He does. Who doubts that He would set Himself openly and directly against a segregated vice district? Who questions what ballot He would hold in a law enforcement campaign? The Son of God came with one theme, one passion, one task,—the bringing in of His Father's Kingdom. And in preaching the Kingdom He could not avoid naming its enemies. He drew from them the cloaks in which they hid themselves from the people they deceived, branded their treachery, and destroyed their cunning devices of sophistry.

When a political campaign is being waged and high

principles are at stake, let us remember that a dissertation on "good citizenship" is fine in its place, but that good government comes by eternal vigilance, ceaseless agitation, and clean votes.

The Son of God goes forth to war, and not the least of the battles is the battle of ballots!

But there are men who would not steal a cent, who would not misappropriate a single dollar of a trust fund, who do steal liberty, who do take the priceless institutions of freedom without paying for them, who are civic grafters.

It was one of these who said some years ago, during a campaign for State-wide prohibition in Vermont, "Prohibition will carry the State all right; and, if I wasn't so busy, I should like to vote myself." In the election which followed, he and his kind defeated prohibition, for, with one hundred thousand eligible voters in the State, only fifty thousand went to the polls, and a majority of the delinquents were registered in territory already dry through local option.

Shame! Vermont of the Green Mountains! Vermont, out of which Ethan Allen came to walk with the immortals! The descendants of men who tied rags about their frost-bitten, bleeding feet, and marched through blizzards to die for liberty, sat by their firesides on a day when the honour of their commonwealth and the future of her unborn were at stake, and, with the supreme weapon of citizenship in their hands and the gage of civic battle thrown down, struck not a blow. The battle went to the enemy by default; it was not won, because it was not contested. Hats off always to the heroic men and women who struggled until the last minutes of the voting-day against unfair odds

placed upon them by the indifference of those who should be their fighting comrades, but thrice shame upon those others who sell their neighbour's birthright and their own for the pottage of civic laziness.

For myself I have concluded that I have no right to enjoy, no right to accept for my children, the benefits of a free government unless I am willing to pay the price.

The triumphs of civilisation into which we with our sons and daughters have entered were won by women and men who seriously counted the cost and ungrudgingly paid it. And these same institutions, unimpaired and strengthened, must be passed on to those who come after, by those who live now.

Our whole fabric of government is dependent upon a political system conceived and established by the fathers, but for which we are now responsible. This system of government, changed from time to time to meet the needs of the advancing social order, halted at intervals by the shock of social revolutions from within and the impact of new world forces from without, remains to-day the most hopeful plan of government yet evolved for human progress. The key-stone of this system is the ballot. He whose hands fail to hold the key-stone in its place is traitor to the State, and should be made a man without a country.

But does not the right to vote imply the privilege of not voting? *No;* rather the right to vote enjoins the duty of voting.

The man who is born into a democracy, or becomes a part of it through due process of the law, not only comes into possession of the priceless boons of a democracy for which the torch-bearers of social justice fell and died; he also passes under the rod of social obliga-

tion, which strikes off personal liberty in the name of public welfare.

Suppose that honest citizens generally remain away from the polls on election-day. And why should one man reserve for himself the privilege of easy indifference when for his neighbour to make the same reservation would surely bring disaster upon the homes of both? Let us face the facts. If throughout the United States frugal, sober, respectable men stayed away from the polls in the same proportion in which such men stayed away from the polls in Vermont on the election of which I write, how long would it take the government of which Washington is called the father and Lincoln the saviour, to disappear?

Who is to be more despised, the man who goes to the polls and casts a vote for an evil thing, or the man called upright by his neighbours who does not vote at all? I submit that the latter is the more dangerous of the two; that the indifferent private citizen who fails to vote is in the long run a far greater menace than the official who levies a tax on a brothel, or takes hush-money from a gambler. The corrupt public official reflects his constituency. The delinquencies in public office just about keep step with the indifference in private life; where the citizen does not neglect, the public official seldom betrays.

Free government must eventually fail when men do not practise the truth that every voter is bound, on every offered occasion, unless physical disability prevents, to go to the polls and cast his ballot in such a way as to represent his sovereign sentiments on the issue before the people.

In the exceedingly rare instances where a voter finds himself confronted by an election offering no candidate

or principle representing his convictions, he can always write in his sentiments, or raise a voice of protest that will in effect offset his silence at the polls.

Do I hear a voice repeat the iniquitous falsehood, "But my vote would not count," or, "I should throw my vote away?"

There have been many times when an election was won by a *single* ballot, and elections have failed to carry for righteousness because one man stayed at home.

But this illustration suggests an incidental consideration. The only man who ever throws his vote away is the man who does not vote at all, or who, voting, for some venal consideration votes against his convictions. I may never vote with a majority; but if my vote expresses my citizenship, delivers my own soul, it wins! And for a Christian it is just as much a religious duty to vote as to pray. The ballot is my political prayer. Jesus, the world's "First Citizen," spoke a truth that each succeeding generation has been much too slow to accept when He said, "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's."

What, then, is the conclusion?

First of all, there should be a systematic campaign on the part of patriotic societies, fraternal organisations, and all departments of the church to educate and inspire the citizens and the future citizens as to the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship. In this work editorials and news articles in papers and magazines, modern publicity methods, public meetings, study classes, and city surveys, should all be employed. Such a campaign would have a great opportunity in the patriotic observance of the Fourth of July. "Good-Citizenship Day," should be made the platform for

nation-wide agitation against criminal neglect of the suffrage.

Finally, every citizen not voting at a given election should be required to furnish to the election board the reason or reasons for his failure to vote, and every citizen not voting in two successive elections should be disfranchised for two years unless able to give physical disability as the cause of his delinquency.

Another has described America as "a republic in which all men are sovereigns but in which no man cares to wear a crown." But the crown of American sovereignty is the ballot, and every otherwise worthy citizen who fails to wear his crown denies his kingship and endangers his kingdom.

22

PERSONAL LIBERTY

Text: St. Matthew 19:19. *"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."*

Many years ago a wise man said, "Your personal liberty ends where your neighbour's nose begins." Liberty without love is a dangerous thing indeed, and all the freedom of thought and action that we as individuals possess, is ours because men and women have from time to time surrendered personal liberties in the interest of public welfare. No man could have unrestrained independence in any community where other men are, without injury to his neighbours, and therefore without injury to himself, for by breaking down customs and laws agreed upon to protect all the people he would remove his own defence.

There are times when liberty and license are confused: true liberty has as much of restraint and denial in it as of personal freedom.

We might imagine one man alone in a wilderness as monarch of all he surveys, and absolutely free to do as his moods and passions direct. But even in such a case the man would soon find wild animals to dispute with him his occupancy of the jungle and his enjoyment of its fruits. And killing the animals would remove his source of fur-supply as well as his immediate danger. He could not wantonly destroy the great

trees without inviting killing drought; he could not build fires carelessly without bringing to himself disaster. Truly, no man lives unto himself alone.

The lesson is a most comprehensive one, for it applies equally well to every activity of life, private and public, and to all peoples. Perhaps we have come to associate Personal Liberty with strong drink because the friends and users of beverage alcohol have so persistently used the slogan "Personal liberty" to combat the forces of good citizenship and religion. But in meeting the false argument we have come to see clearly how the great principle of "self-surrender to be truly free" is at the heart of every relation of life.

There can be no peace in the home, no profit in business, no justice in government, no safety in society, no happiness, no culture, no security anywhere, without frank and sincere consideration of others, their comforts, their health, their prosperity, their rights.

Jesus always put into the very heart of His message the "second commandment," "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself"; and, when He did so, He proclaimed not only a Christian doctrine, but a law of social relations that cannot be violated without disaster to the violator. The merchant who sells spoiled fruit loses his trade; the hotel proprietor who serves food that he would not eat himself empties his dining-room; the foreman who curses his men arouses them to hatred and paves the way for a strike; the individual who keeps the better and best for himself loses the most priceless thing in the world—friendship.

There is only one royal road to happiness, the road of unselfish, loving service. He has most who gives most and he is the best beloved who most loves.

Every city has fire limits. In certain districts only

fire-proof construction can be used; specifications that have to do with the minutest details must be complied with before even a foundation can be laid. Floors must be of concrete, roofing of slate. Why? Are not frame houses respectable and attractive? Certainly, but they could not be erected in the crowded districts of a city without endangering the entire community. They would be veritable tinder-boxes. Your present liberty, your right to build a frame house, thoroughly good of itself, and in its place, is entirely removed in the interest of public safety.

A man who tries to commit suicide breaks the law. He is imprisoned if he survives. Why? Because the effect of his action on society is bad, leading others to regard life lightly, setting a poor example for youth and exerting an evil influence on the morbid and the highly nervous.

A man cannot drive where he will; he must obey the traffic laws. One poorly managed automobile often congests a crowded avenue for many minutes.

You cannot eat what you will. If you think that you can, remember the future builds upon the present. To-day sanatoriums are crowded with dyspeptics who were the gormandisers of yesterday.

Let us return to the quotation, "Your personal liberty ends where your neighbour's nose begins." I have a perfect right to swing my hands vigorously in front of me, and up and down, and round about;—a perfect right; but, if another man is within arm's length of me and I swing my hands vigorously and heedlessly or angrily, there may be, and very likely will be, a perfect riot.

Canadian thistles are beautiful when in their purple bloom, but you cannot grow them in your back yard.

The thistledown with seeds for many thistles will be carried by the autumn winds into your neighbour's yard, and thistles are regarded by society as a pest.

You have a right to walk the streets of your city, to appear unmolested in any public place—until you become afflicted with measles or some other contagious disease.

Drink destroys the liberty of the drinker. See him stagger and fall. He can no longer direct his steps, or rule his limbs. Hear him shout and curse. He does not know what he is saying, and has lost command of his thoughts. His eyes are blinded; his moral sense is dulled; his baser passions are unleashed; his better self is chained. The drunkard is the most complete and pitiable slave of them all, in bondage as to body, mind, and soul.

Drink destroys the liberty of the drinker's wife and children, of his loved ones and his friends. Is the woman in ragged garments and with a bruised face, begging from door to door, free? Is the lad forced to wear the shame of a drunkard's child, free? Is the broken-hearted parent who mourns the death of a dissolute son, shot in a saloon brawl, free? Are the friends of such a one free?

Drink destroys the liberty of a nation, for a nation's freedom is established upon the lives of the men and women who fill her homes and man her shops. She survives or perishes as they are strong or weak.

Shall we continue to respect the "personal liberty" of those who would destroy themselves and us? Shall we continue to respect the "personal liberty" of those who would coin into money the tears of women and children and the cries of unfortunates possessed of a fiendish thirst they cannot master so long as the thing

that arouses it survives because the laws of nation are violated? Shall we continue to be deceived by the cry, "Personal liberty" when the cry is the demand, not for liberty but for license? Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself is the answer of Jesus Christ.

23

HOMESICK!*

Text: I JOHN 5:4. *"This is the victory that overcomes the world."*

"I am homesick for the feathery bamboo waving in the soft spring breezes; for the yellow of the mustard and the purple blossoms of the soy bean back of beautiful Lake Side. I want to smell the wistaria that blooms on our hills and pick violets back of the rice fields. The white-sailed boats scudding over Timg Ting will be a welcome sight to me and I expect that I shall want to hug all my little yellow school kiddies when I get *home!*"

Before me is a letter from a missionary soon to return to China after a year of furlough, and this is the closing paragraph.

When I saw her first she was a black-eyed, black-haired, laughing school girl, and I was a little boy. We picked flowers together on the sunny hill-slopes of western Pennsylvania's Alleghenies. We waded in the beautiful mountain stream that went singing through the golden summer days close by her home. Where the stones were smooth and the currents swift she held my hand and steadied me. She was a rare chum! I can hear her laugh to-day ringing clear as a sweet-toned bell, and the music of her full-throated

* This chapter and the eight following contain a series of "short sermon stories."

song floats across the years and fills my thought with melody.

When she went to China, some people talked about "buried talents," "the pity of it," "the disappointment they suffered," and "the unreasoning mind of the devotee." But she sailed away into the sunset and her tear-dimmed eyes were smiling, for her heart was fixed, and on her lips was the name of Him "whom having not seen she loved."

The years have passed and once again her face is set toward the hills of Tang. Her furlough is over and she is glad! She has watered with her tears the grave of her father who died breathing the name of his baby girl twelve thousand miles away. She has lifted her infant son from the failing mother arms that nestled her, and, standing by the side of the man "God gave her," she has raised her eyes to the rice fields whither she journeys to her life's work on the rainbow shores of Timg Ting. Again my eyes fall to the closing sentence of her letter. "I am homesick. . . . I shall want to hug all my little yellow school kiddies when I get *home!*"

She has forgotten the fever and the heat, the filth of diseased beggars, the insolent eyes with malice shot, the anguish of her friends who died, the bloody sword of the empire, the screaming of the rebel shells.—No, she has not forgotten!

"O Love, that passeth knowledge; this is the victory that overcomes the world!"

24

THE MAN WHO WAS PARDONED

Text: Isaiah 55:7. *"He will abundantly pardon."*

It was Christmas Sunday. Two hundred and fifty men and thirty women were assembled for religious services in the chapel of a County Work House. After the sermon, the wife of the Superintendent of City Missions very earnestly invited those present to publicly express any desire that might be in their hearts to live changed lives.

It was a strange scene, and a strange setting for a testimony service. Crowded benches with grey-clad prisoners, guards on high chairs armed with heavy clubs, the matron with the women under her charge at the very rear of the room, and the speaker and singers on the platform. Men who do not know would say, "A hard audience to reach," but no man ever spoke to a more responsive, a more earnest one. And by way of digression it is well to add that an audience of this kind is never harder to address than any other, and very frequently it is much more responsive than the average Sunday morning congregation of the church, providing the speaker talks to *men,*—weak, vile, broken, heart-sick, discouraged, sinning men—but *men* nevertheless. Many a prison message is ruined by being "fixed up" for *criminals.*

To the appeal already referred to, perhaps fifteen men responded,—several coloured men, several aged men, and several very young men. Their testimonies were much the same, and every voice shook with emotion. One poor fellow dropped his head to the back of the bench in front of him as he finished speaking, his body shaking with sobs. Nearly every man who spoke wept, and at least half of the great body of prisoners were in tears. It was sternly, realistically, compellingly impressive. One lad spoke of his mother,—"She taught me right,—she is dead. I got into bad company,"—and others followed his lead. Spiritually it was all elemental. There was positively no room for fine-spun theories, and nowhere was there the suggestion of doubt. Jesus Christ was the lamb of God "that taketh away the sin of the world." Men, coarse of face, and with souls seasoned in the weathers of sin, but touched now by the Holy Spirit, were turning not to the theological dogma of one school or of another, but were crying out to "the lamb for sinners slain."

How heartening! How strengthening to weakening faith! What a relief from the laboured sentences of apologists! What an oasis from the starving plains of modern theological controversy!

Are you depressed? Are you starving spiritually? Then go to the rescue mission, the church for "down and outs," the penitentiary, the work house,—go there to see the bruised hands and feet, the bleeding, ragged brow, the opened side; go there to hear again and to rejoice with exceeding joy in the knowledge that "nothing but the blood of Jesus can wash away my sin."

And now a tall coloured man is speaking. He is very deeply moved. "I am fifty-two years old. I have

been here eighteen months. My mother died years ago. No one has ever visited me. I have no friends. I haven't a friend in the world." And he closed by expressing a desire to live a changed life, and the determination to find Jesus Christ. Immediately the Superintendent of the Work House arose, in the rear of the hall, and as soon as he could attract the attention of the leader of the services, came to the front and with a touch of the dramatic in his words announced that he had selected the man who had just spoken, the man who had no friends, and without "political pull," a coloured man,—to receive the annual Christmas pardon. "And," he concluded, "I know that all the boys will rejoice with you, Henderson." And they did! Henderson's face beamed with the sun-burst of a soul doubly pardoned.

It was a stirring, a never-to-be-forgotten moment. What a setting for the appeal that every man accept the Christmas pardon of Jesus Christ! The Superintendent had only one pardon to bestow, but the Saviour of the world had for every man a pardon unconditional, everlasting and free. It did not seem strange to those who saw and heard and rejoiced, that fully half of the three hundred grey-clad men and women lifted their hands in the closing moments of that memorable service, asking for the prayers of their brothers and sisters who had tasted and found good "the waters of salvation."

25

LEAD ON, LORD JESUS!

Text: St. Luke 28:20. *"Even unto the end of the world."*

Softly the wind whispered through the sheltering boughs of overhanging trees. Kindly and warm the sun pressed through and lit the faces of a dozen men, young men, bowed in morning prayer. A providential place it was for such a group,—an Indian mound that nestles close down by the shores of lovely Lake Winona.

But the men! Strong men they are, and from the four corners of the earth they come. An engineer from England and a college professor from the same country; a missionary from India and another from China. A college President from Oregon; a pastor from Kansas and a bank president from the same State. An accountant from Missouri. An Orphans' Home Superintendent from Ohio. An Indiana college man. A lad from a middle western farm. A boy from a freight office, and a carpenter.

And these men are tendered and commanded by the same overwhelming impulse. It shines from their eyes and is in the grip of their strong hands. Their faces are glorified with it, and now they breathe it forth in sacramental prayer:—"To know Thy will, O Father, and to do my full best. To have no stain of guilt and no unsurrendered part in all my life, for

Jesus' sake." The bronzed disciple from beyond the sea pleads softly in the deep tones of a virile man, and the united voice of the mound is raised in the Amen.

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all me unto me." He has drawn them, and they follow on! Nor curling waves nor tides nor hemispheres, nor gold, nor lusts, nor life nor death shall halt their tread, neither shall the gates of Hell prevail against them! Lead on, Lord Jesus,—manly, matchless, Holy One. Lead on!

26

"UNTO THE LEAST"

Text: St. Matthew 25:40. *"Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me."*

We were waiting for a train in a small junction town of Iowa, and had breakfasted in the "hotel."

While we sat in the office, which also served as parlour and a smoking-room, an unfortunate lad came limping in. A pathetic figure he was, with bloodshot eyes, great head, and frail body,—one of the refuse of the world. He hurried by the loungers to the desk, and we heard him say, "Any work to-day?" And a ringing voice replied: "Sure, just waiting for you, Ben. Here's the broom. Sweep off the walk."

Our interest was aroused, for it was very apparent that "Ben" couldn't sweep, that his poor arms had scarcely strength to lift the broom. And what sort of a man would give such an unfortunate work, anyhow? A handsome fellow he was, son of the proprietor. He stepped in while we were at breakfast, and responded to the greetings of the men about the place, with whom he seemed to be in good standing, by saying with the frank pride that warms the heart of a man who is far from home, that his wife and the baby were "doing nicely."

"Ben" clutched the broom, and wabbled out of the door, and with feeble strokes began a ludicrous effort

to follow instructions. A pathetic sight it was. As I watched him, the young fellow at the desk watched too; and then, seeing that I had a friendly interest in the case, he came, and dropping into the vacant chair at my side, told me a story in which he himself, although he didn't realise it, was the hero.

The crippled, weak-minded lad was the rude jest of the town until the son of the hotel-keeper came home from college and broke a few ruffians' heads. "It made me fighting mad," he said, "to hear them plague the boy. They let him alone now. But—do you know—what the chap wanted wasn't protection or sympathy. He wanted to be treated like other people; and, when I found that out, I began treating him like a man. Every day he comes here and goes to work. You've sized him up; he can't work; his poor legs bend like a willow and he is nearly blind; but, sir, he is happy now; do you hear him try to whistle? He goes with me to the station, and keeps his hand on the mail-cart. Thinks he helps. The travelling men are mighty kind to him, and he picks up a nickel now and then."

The young man was silent for a moment, and then he said, and in a tone of apology, "Before our baby was born I felt a trifle easier because I'd tried to be decent to Ben,—you ought to see our boy!"

"Ben" limped along to the train with us; and, as the "Northwestern" whistled in, he shouted in a quavering voice, "Train west; all aboard."

27

A HEART STORY

Text: Proverbs 11:30. *"He that winneth souls is wise."*

Some years ago, under an oak-tree on the campus of my college, I put my hand on the shoulder of a friend, and said, "Frank, every day I am praying that you will become a Christian."

It was the day of my graduation. The next morning I started on a three-thousand-mile journey.

Frank was a freshman, just at the turning of his young manhood. He would have been classed with the "awkward squad," for he was overgrown and self-conscious; but he was big-hearted and clean and in every fine particular a gentleman. He very quickly developed into an exceptionally strong and handsome man.

I came to know him well on the athletic field. He was not an athlete himself, when I first knew him, but many a time he has rubbed me down after a gruelling game or a heart-breaking finish. He was one of those who build the indefinable spirit of a college, and he was always ready to fill a place, however small and obscure.

When honours came to him later, he bore them well. He became an associate member of the college Young Men's Christian Association when I was its president. He had been on my prayer-list for months before I

spoke to him about it; and when I did speak, on the occasion referred to, he gripped my hand and thanked me.

During that year he became a Christian and united with the church. He wrote me very happily after his decision, and I experienced the quiet joy that comes with each fresh assurance that God answers prayer.

I shall always be glad that one year after graduation I returned for the commencement exercises of my college. In one year there are changes; but things are still pretty much the same, and the papers do not yet refer to you as a "former student."

Twelve months to a day from the time I said goodbye to Frank I greeted him again, and in the late afternoon we spent an hour together on the steps of the old Administration Building. We saw each other for a few moments on the following day, and then we separated for *time*. I am glad that there will be reunions in eternity.

On leaving college Frank established himself in business in southern Oregon. He married most happily, and friends who were privileged to visit it tell me that his home was a delightful place. From its first morning it had a family altar. He was very soon elected superintendent of the local Sunday school, and he became a pillar in the church.

One afternoon during a summer vacation period my friend, with his wife and two associates, made an exploring trip into the caves of the lava-beds near their camp. They entered the caves single-file, paying out behind them a line to direct them on their return through the intricate mazes of the dark chambers. My friend led the way, carrying in addition to his torch a loaded revolver to guard against a possible surprise

from the wild animals which are often found in the lava-beds.

Suddenly, and in a way that will never be explained, my friend lost his footing; and, as he crashed down, his revolver was discharged; the bullet, entering an eye, pierced his brain. The light which he carried was extinguished by his fall, and, in the panic which followed, the other torch was destroyed.

With no thought of herself, the young wife groped through the awful darkness until she found her loved one, and then with his head in her lap she waited through the long hours that brought no help.

Pursued by a mad terror, her two associates had turned and fled when the lights went out, and their wild fears so robbed them of reason that they were unable to tell a coherent story of the tragedy or direct the rescuers, when they reached the camp.

When the young wife was no longer able to detect a flicker of life in the dear form she clasped, she staggered through the long caverns to the light, and then led back the sad party that bore out the broken body of my friend. That she lived is remarkable; that she retained her reason is a miracle.

I have written this to-day because I have been thinking about Frank. In an old diary I found a letter his wife wrote me soon after the funeral, which was held in the old college town where they brought his body for burial among the scenes he knew as a boy and among the friends who loved him. It is a very brave and a very wonderful letter, and the last lines of it are these:

"And I wanted you to know that in the morning, when we knelt in prayer, Frank always prayed for you."

And now I understand! There were times when I was weak, and Frank's prayers made me strong; there were times when I should have failed, but Frank's prayers made me sufficient for the need. He came in to me across high mountains and wide prairies, and every morning he stood by my side. We got together by way of the Throne, and in the comradeship there was power.

This evening at the setting of the sun, which is still shining on the far-away grave of the splendid fellow God took off my prayer-list, I begin to know what the wise man meant when he said, "He that winneth souls is wise."

28

"HE DID IT!"

Text: St. John 10:10. *"I am come that they might have life."*

A great crowd filled the Canadian Pacific railroad station at Winnipeg, Manitoba, on a February morning in 1915 when the writer hurried into the waiting-room and made inquiries about his train. Wounded soldiers from "over-seas" were expected, and their loved ones and friends were waiting tremulously to receive them.

We stood strangely thrilled to see the glad reunion. There were cheers and tears and there was laughter—these latter two are so close that in a supreme moment they always mingle—when the lads in khaki came through the gate. Ah, what a scene it was! Broken bodies gathered into the embrace of mothers who had waited so long, drawn faces covered with the kisses of sisters and sweethearts, wearied forms borne away in the arms of fathers and brothers.

There were times when I could not see for my weeping—and no man was so weak as to wipe his tears away. The pegging of the crutches, the crying and the shouting flowed together in a great "Amen."

A little group close by me especially attracted my attention. A mother and father and three sisters—or perhaps one was more than a sister—welcomed a languid fellow who, while his body bore no visible hurt, told of the awful gases with twitching muscles and sunken chest. How the boy—he was hardly twenty—

drank them in, and how their eyes, after the riot of the first greeting, devoured him! For a long moment they stood in a silence that was in effect the mightiest shout.

And then the soldier turned, and cried eagerly: "Jim,—where is Jim? Jim, old chap!" And Jim was hard by. I had noticed him before as he came hobbling through the gate with our friend whose loved ones had so quickly seized him. A leg gone close against his body, he had been leaning heavily upon his crutch, looking—wistfully, I thought—at the little group that swallowed up his companion. No one had come to meet him.

At the calling of his name he smiled and took a step forward, and then happened one of the most dramatic incidents that I have ever seen. The boy with the hollow cheeks reached his hands toward the crippled soldier; his face flushed until it was afire; and he said, "He did it, mother; he did it." With a cry that no words have yet been found to express, that mother swept across the space between her and the friend of her boy, put her arms about him, crutch and all, and kissed him as she had kissed her own son. Nor were the father and the sisters far behind. It was as though the first scene of a great human tragedy had been acted again. Over and over that great-bodied father exclaimed: "God bless you, sir! God bless you, sir! God bless you!"

Here is the story. It was the first days of the gassing on the Somme. One morning, after several hours of preparatory shelling, the battalion of which these two young men were members was ordered out of the trenches and across "No-man's-land" to take the German position directly in front.

But there was no chance. The artillery had not completed its work. The wire entanglements still barred the way. The young Canadians with their cutters and with their bare hands vainly tore at them, hurling their poor bodies hopelessly into their barbed mazes. The machine guns poured in a very vomit of steel,—and then came the gas!

Close along the ground rolled that merciless cloud; with fiendish cunning it filled every depression, seeking out the wounded that had fallen, and giving them a grave-shroud from the very torture-room of hell.

The broken remnant of the battalion was called back to its trench. It was then that Jim, turning as he rolled to safety, heard his friend scream, and saw him plunge headlong into the awful fumes. With a mad fury he tore off his shirt—it was before the masks came—ripped it through, bound it about his face, and before the hands of his comrades could restrain him he sprang again into the open, straight into the gas and shell.

It was all over in a moment. Like a wild animal Jim came crawling back, dragging his comrade. He could not walk, for his right leg had been mangled horribly in that first mad leap; but back he came! "He did it! He did it!"

Ah, I shall never forget that morning in Winnipeg!

To-day I am thinking of the glad reunion when the mother took again her son and poured out the gratitude of her heart upon his saviour. And in thinking of them I have come to think of that other soldier, that other saviour, the Saviour of the world, who gave not a limb, but His life, to bear me, to bear us all, back to the trench of safety. Ah! "He did it! He did it! He did it!"

29

MY FIRST PRAYER

Text: St. Matthew 11:24. *"What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them and ye shall have them."*

I do not remember when I began to pray. I lisped that prayer at my mother's knee, and the bedside petition was fixed in my life before the days of my earliest recollections. But I very vividly remember *my* first prayer.

I was a junior in college at the time, and as the result of a local oratorical contest had been selected to represent my institution in the State oratorical contest.

On Tuesday, three days before the night of the great event, which on this occasion was to take place in our own city, I became violently ill with chills and fever. The doctor diagnosed the case as grippe, with a strong inclination toward pneumonia, the result of a very foolish bicycle ride too early in the season, which resulted in ever-exertion and over-heating.

I shall never forget the expression of disappointment that clouded my professor's face as he stood looking down upon me, the wreck of his oratorical hopes. My own chagrin and self-chiding were harder to bear than the physical hurt, for I knew how intense the disappointment of my college associates would be when they learned that through my carelessness the institu-

tion we loved would not be represented in the contest that she was to entertain.

Ah, how black a night that Tuesday night was! In the moments between delirious dreams I thought of Friday, and every dream was a nightmare in which angry students rolled great weights upon me.

Early on Wednesday morning my small white dog crept into my arms, and shoved her moist nose under my chin. She was a real comforter. Impulsively I dropped my hand on her head. As I did so, I turned slightly, and my eyes rested upon an old-fashioned green wall-motto, lettered in silver, that hung just above the wainscoting, directly across the room. I do not remember that I had ever noticed that motto before. The words of the text fastened upon my feverish brain,—"There hath not failed one word of all His good promise." And the suggestion flashed through my mind: "Try it out. Pray for another chance, a fighting chance." Without a single mental reservation, I floundered over on my face and with the fever singing in my ears *prayed.*

Ah, if ever a young man prayed, I prayed that morning, just for a fighting chance to represent my college on Friday night. I did not pray for victory; for other men and other colleges were to be considered, but I did pray for strength to command my wabbling limbs and for nerve to go through with my oration somehow. It was no formal supplication that I made, and there was no searching for choice phrases and pleasing sentences. The call that went out from my soul that morning was an unstripped appeal for help.

There on that cot in the old sitting-room at home, for the first time in my life, I "prayed through."

When assurance came, and it did come as clearly and unmistakably as the doctor came a few minutes later, I knew that I should deliver my oration. The physician laughed and humoured me when I told him, and then reached down for my pulse. Other friends were sure that it was a mere whim of the delirium. But I *knew*. Mother believed, and the dear old professor understood.

Wednesday was a very trying day; Thursday was easier; but on Friday morning I was utterly miserable. For the first time since the message of the old green card had given me new hope, I was despairing. But again my eyes turned to the motto, and the silver words fairly leaped across the room to me, "There hath not failed one word of all His good promise." And I slid to the floor, and gripped that rock of truth as a drowning man lays hold upon the offered line of escape.

When the doctor came, he found my fever broken. He was very much surprised, and said that the sudden subsiding of the temperature accounted for my unusual weakness. I reminded him that it was *Friday;* and then he resolutely shook his head, and gave me an unconditional refusal. But I went through the day with the words, "There hath not failed one word of all His good promise," strengthening me; and at five o'clock in the afternoon I sent for the doctor again. This time he heard *my* ultimatum, and I was fully attired when I delivered it.

Like the good fellow he was—for he loved the old school too—he set to work to help the Almighty get me in shape for my fifteen minutes on the platform. The drawing had placed me first; there were six speakers, and the man of science nursed nature along to

have me as strong as I could possibly be on the minute, and if possible strong enough to go through that crucial quarter of an hour.

But the arm that I leaned upon that night was not the arm of the doctor, and it was not the arm of the dear old professor, much as he meant to me. And when I finally got to the platform, and for an instant the lights went out, and a wall of blackness was before my eyes, it was "There hath not failed one word of all His good promise," that turned the lights on again.

I went through the fifteen minutes, and walked off the stage and out of sight before I collapsed. God kept His word; I had offered up *my first prayer;* for the first time in my life I had *prayed through,* and ever after I was to have the assurance of the vital fact of intercession.

Many times since that day when I tossed in pain upon the couch in the sitting-room back at college I have turned my eyes to the old green wall-motto and it has never failed me. From that day to this I have not doubted my right to have an answer to every prayer. The desired answer has not always come. Many prayers have been answered in the negative, and some answers have been long delayed; but in times of spiritual stress, when doubts troubled, and discouraging fears all but defeated faith, as well as in those more numerous even days when hope held an open way, the message of the old green card has triumphed.

Yesterday I came upon the motto at the bottom of a battered trunk that I was preparing for cremation. I found it packed away with basket-ball posters, a pair of running "spikes," two white gloves that my mother

never wore, and an old papier-mâché horseshoe that reminded me of an athletic struggle in far-away Seattle.

This morning I brought the card to the city, and had it framed. I have a place for it on the wall of the living room where my children play.

30

A FATHER'S DILEMMA

CHESTNUTTING WITH THE BOYS VS. THE WORLD'S SERIES ALONE

Text: PHILIPPIANS 1:23. *"For I am in a strait betwixt two!"*

It was the morning of Thursday, October 12, 1916, in Boston, Massachusetts,—Boston, famous for a hundred shrines of American history, and distinguished as the greatest educational, literary and musical centre of the New World, but on that day "stark mad" with baseball enthusiasm.

The "Red Sox" had soundly trounced the Brooklyn "Trolley-Dodgers" on the preceding day in the fourth game of the post-season series for the world's championship. All fandom,—and this title includes pretty nearly all the one hundred and ten million inhabitants of the United States and Canada—was breathing in short, staccato gasps and waiting for the umpire to announce the rival batteries for the last game.

The day was flawless, an open sky without a cloud; air crisp without being sharp, and a sun that gave every blushing leaf an added tinge of gold.

I sat in the office busied with some of the extras that would not respect even a holiday. With unusual

deliberation I signed my letters; and finally, with the small tasks all done, I settled back for a finish fight with myself.

I wanted to see that game. Every passing moment added to my desire and increased the fever in my blood. But it was a holiday, a day when the feet of children do not tramp the corridors of schoolhouses; and this particular holiday was the first of the year with chestnuts on the ground.

I knew that two small boys and their wee sister were waiting in the hall at home for the telephone bell to ring and for a man's voice to say: "Hello, there; get your sweaters on; have the buckets ready. I will be out on the one o'clock."

And then the telephone took my attention, and an impatient man yelled in my ear: "Hey, you! Do you want this ticket? There are seventeen thousand insane men and boys trying to take it away from me. Speak quick, or I shall be assassinated."

It was my friend talking, and he was holding a place for me to the last moment.

The fight was all over, for I said in a voice of sublime hypocrisy: "Sorry, old chap; but I have an important engagement. Many thanks. I will do as much for you another time."

I made the "one o'clock" after edging through the crowds bound for the Braves' Field. Trying to feel cheerful, I found a seat. The car was not crowded going out! At the Back Bay an old man came in, and with a cry of amazement dropped down by my side. After carefully adjusting his glasses he sized me up, and then said with fine scorn:

"Well, I thought that every man on the verdant side of seventy and not under legal restraint was on his

way to the ball-game. You are not seventy, and you don't look like an escaped inmate."

I replied: "Your diagnosis is correct and complimentary. I am going chestnutting with my boys."

The old man dropped his jester tone, lost the banter from his eye, and said brusquely: "Sir, I would give a million dollars for the chance to go chestnutting with my boys. I used to dream of that sort of thing,—but the boys never came."

We sat in an understanding silence for the twenty minutes that elapsed before the conductor shouted, "Newton," and the old man dropped off.

There was length to my stride and a spring in my step when I turned into my own street, and with the indescribable thrill that a man never knows until the fingers of his little ones rest convulsively in his hands I greeted the children as they came shouting to meet me. Such a bedlam of voices! No chance for a single minute of postponement. Without changing a thread I was off to the woods.

What an afternoon it was! I lost my fountain pen, and accumulated a stock of thistle burrs larger than I gathered of chestnuts. A club from the hands of my first-born, on its return trip from the upper reaches of a tree, contributed a lump on the top of my head to the miscellaneous collection of the day.

Coming home, the "little lady" lost one of her shoes, and with tearful intercession beguiled me into carrying her. We were late for supper, and I was too tired to eat any of it. The children were sure they had had a glorious time. The dining-room sounded like a circus-tent, and with each voice crowding in on the others the three told their mother all about the great adventure.

Any regrets that might have troubled me earlier in the day were all forgotten when one of the lads, hugging me about the knees, said in a sudden burst of confidence, "Daddy is all right, mother; feel the lump on his head."

In the morning a friend with malicious enthusiasm gave me an illuminated description of the game I had missed, and the only one I could have seen. But he was disappointed. My lack of remorse was too evidently unaffected and too genuinely sincere as I said, "Well, I went chestnutting with the children. Feel the lump on my head!"

31

THE LAND OF TIME ENOUGH

Text: I Corinthians 7:29. *"The time is short."*

I know a land of vast and silent places, a land where mountains, pine-clad and well-watered, break up into foothills and go down to meet the desert; where the cottonwoods mingle with the piñons and cedars, and the sage grows rank on the mesas; a land of all-encircling and never-failing sunlit skies, of sunsets that fling upward all the colours of the spectrum in faultless blendings to light the sapphire dome of God's own Taj Mahal, and where the moon, like a galleon of enchantment, floats upon a shoreless silver sea.

A land of yesterday, whose forests are frozen in crystal and preserved in agate, where the paths of Coronado follow down a beaten way of peoples whose cliff castles were old when Egypt raised her pyramids.

A land of to-morrow, where presently a golden sea will flow across the sands and where orchard isles will raise their emerald shores above the flood of grain.

Here one may see the children of the past, a garish remnant of a race, and feel the furtive eyes of wild things that steal away along the trail. Here one may lose himself and dream.

Stand there upon some lava hill, and look away a hundred miles into the south. A blue haze marks a tree-fringed crest, where eagles soar along the desert

rim. Beyond is what the Indians called a garden of the gods, and our fathers, when they first beheld it, "A valley of paradise." Streams flow from hidden deathless springs. Rich grasses grow along the floor of flowered, deep ravines. There are forests, nut-bearing vines, wild fruits, and half a hundred kinds of game. As the wild life of the alkali desert seeks the scant shade of the rocks and moistens its parched throat with the slime of the brackish pool, it turns its burning eyes toward the rim of that valley; and man, caught in the dread heat of the plain, rides hard through the night to bring his beast to its rich meadows and himself to its fruits and its rest.

The tale runs that in times past only those found the trail that leads below who had not finished their ride, who had yet much distance to cover, but who were spent with the heat and done nigh to the death. These found the way, and to these came the strength to finish their course. Strange to relate, all who ever came out of the valley lived forever, and were forever unhurried.

There is another Paradise Valley lying just over the rim, and I have named it the Land of Time Enough.

From the heat of the day, from the toil and the grind, from the long hours of pain, from the disappointment and sorrow, from the deep mystery of human existence, I lift my eyes where the eagles soar over the crest, and ride on toward the Land of Time Enough.

Time enough to do the many things we never yet have touched; time enough to finish all those things that are but half-begun; time enough to read the books that call to us from out their shelves, to sit before the pictures we have hurried by, to hear the master songs we never yet have heard; time enough to romp with

children down their paths of play; to listen to the dreams of daughters and the hopes of sons; to ramble in the fields of memory with those we "lost awhile"; to know our friends; time enough to walk with kings of thought, to talk with Christ; time enough to do and dare, to live and love.

This is

> The land toward which I ride,
> The land beyond the rim,
> Beyond the Great Divide,
> The land of "Enter In."

And I hear the voice that answers all my questions say, "Let not your heart be troubled. . . . In my Father's house are many mansions. . . . I go to prepare a place for you."

This is the Land of Time Enough.

THE END

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